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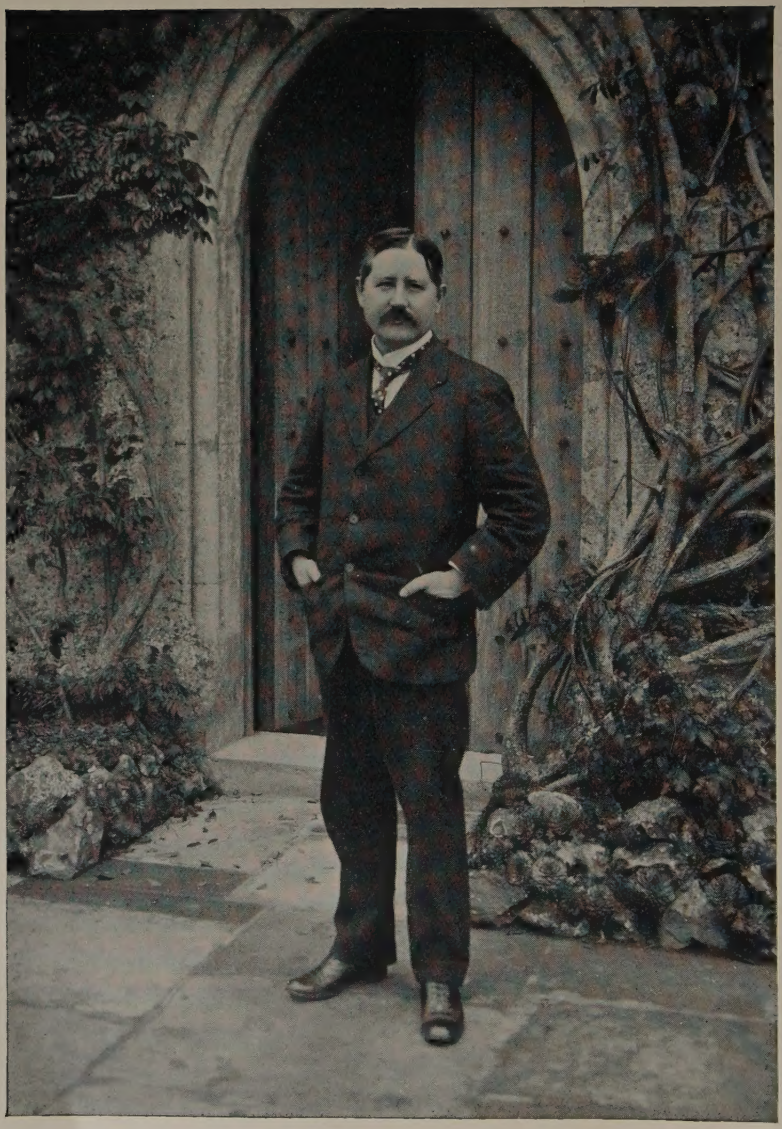
THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF SIR HARRY JOHNSTON



Sir Harry Johnston at St. John's Priory

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THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF SIR HARRY JOHNSTON

BY

ALEX. JOHNSTON

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To

W. M. J.

WHO JOURNEYED WITH US

PART OF THE WAY

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FOREWORD

THE fact that I am his brother, was for thirteen years his Private Secretary in different parts of the world, and now have access to his unused correspondence may be sufficient justification for my writing *The Life and Letters of Sir Harry Johnston.*

My aim is to supplement, not to supersede, his autobiography published by Messrs. Chatto & Windus in England and Messrs. Bobbs-Merrill in America in 1923, under the title of *The Story of My Life.*

To be complete, the analysis of a man's life should be made both by himself and by witnesses. I question the cynicism that a man is never a hero to his valet. I know he can be to his Secretary, though none knows better his chief's hidden springs of action and all his funny little foibles. By claiming the privilege of a near relation to season great with little things, I hope I may render my brother not less, but more, attractive in the eyes of others.

There was much more in him than the artist, the explorer, the Doctor of Science, the Governor, the knight of two Orders, the Gold Medallist of five Societies, the novelist and the free-lance politician known to the public. Mr. W. T. Stead (whose daughter I wish to thank here for the loan of letters), not realizing that the success of the last of these rôles was incompatible with the energy expanded so widely on the rest, even ventured to prophesy for him in quite early days no less a rôle than the Premiership. That may strike the reader as extravagant, but not

necessarily inconsistent with the verdict of two of my brother's most intimate friends and colleagues – Sir Alfred Sharpe and Mr. Edward Vicars – to whom I am also indebted for the loan of some of his letters. Both have written to me to say that Harry was the most brilliant man they ever met. I think they meant this estimate to apply even more to their private than to their public view of him. A man can only be intimate to his intimates, but it is for them to retail to a wider circle those same intimate touches without which great actions and still greater aims lack humanity.

A many-sided man of strong will and convictions must inevitably cause friction and make some enemies. Harry's wit, though it gave persuasiveness to the frequent vehemence of his views, often offended those who themselves lacked an introspective sense of humour, while his earnestness and logic would admit of no softening compromise. Time gives me an advantage over my brother; for his controversies are just sufficiently remote by now to allow of their being alluded to without bad taste. Mere indiscretion is, I believe, reckoned a virtue in biographers nowadays.

Writing of himself, a man may reveal, but cannot describe his own character. If it be praise, he cannot even quote the opinion of others. Living, as he did, the lives of three ordinary men of genius at a time of greatest expansion in our thought, research and Empire, Harry came successively into close personal touch with such diverse and outstanding people as Sir Henry M. Stanley, W. T. Stead, Cardinal Manning, Sir Richard Burton, Sir Charles Dilke, the late Lord

Salisbury, Queen Alexandra, Lord Northcliffe, Lord Bryce, President Roosevelt, and Mr. H. G. Wells. I have been witness of the mutually favourable impression established by some of these contacts. In other cases I have to judge by my brother's anecdotes and letters. In cases where a mutual enmity, coldness or suspicion arose, if I seem to more than echo my brother's strictures of his opponents, it is only from the conviction that they had a somewhat unfair advantage over him, not necessarily that they were conscious of unfairness. That is to say, they wielded or inspired powers of government or preferment to his disadvantage; or were able to impose silence on him so long as he remained a Consular official, and then to cold-shoulder him out of politics.

Puzzled observers of his career have often asked me to explain why he did not attain more of his ambitions and realize more completely the high hopes of his friends. It would be impossible to give this explanation if I left out of account the personal element which really lies at the bottom of so much unrecorded or misconstrued history.

I have usually made it a practice to summarize rather than to quote Press notices, but there may be cases where I should have named my authority and have forgotten to do so, or lost it. Only in Chapter IV have I quoted conversations which took place when I was not present, and for these I have pleasure in acknowledging the kind permission of Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., the publishers of my brother's book, *The Kilimanjaro Expedition,* 1884.

THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF SIR HARRY JOHNSTON

CHAPTER I

THOUGH historical civilization began on the Nile, Africa may be called the Newest World. Not till the second half of the Nineteenth Century were its vastest waterways and its remotest mountains clearly revealed.

During the years of keenest speculation as to what might still be unveiled in its dark interior, there was born in South London one who was destined to become the last of its great explorers, pre-eminent among its Governors, and without doubt its greatest chronicler – Harry Hamilton Johnston. He not only wrote the history of Africa, but often made it.

As I mean to avoid in this book any matter which he has himself sufficiently described, I will only refer to his ancestry in so far as it may have influenced his career and character, passing quickly to the often thrilling adventures of his early manhood and his later and greater achievements which from motives of modesty, discretion or economy of space he has overlooked or but lightly sketched himself.

Ours was a Suburban family, touched with some romance, of sufficient means for thought and leisure and not enough to encourage loafing. Our father's great-grandfather left Scotland for London. He thought much of the Johnston plaid and crest, and wasted a fortune in an unsuccessful attempt to prove his title to the Earldom of Annandale. His son, Captain George Johnston, after gaining distinction in the siege of

Gibraltar, settled in Kennington, then a village to the south of Georgian London. Here our Johnston grandfather, our father, and Harry himself were born.

Our branch of the Johnston clan had been a very clerical family in Scotland, and later generations, with twists in direction, have run along the same groove, from which Harry very decidedly, though not always completely, reacted. Concurrently, in London, our family also produced leaders in the Insurance world. Our father, with the energy and earnestness of two ordinary men, divided his time between the service of an intense and very mystical religion and the Royal Insurance Company, of which he was Secretary and in great part the founder. He travelled extensively in Sweden, Russia, Central Europe, Asia Minor, Spain and Cape Colony. He was an interested Member of the Royal Geographical Society, and an Imperialist before Disraeli. Harry (the eldest son of his second marriage) was born in 1858, and soon displayed the inheritance of his father's gift for organization and leadership as well as his love of travel.

It was from his mother's family, the Hamiltons, (also of Scottish descent) that my brother probably derived his strong artistic strain and his whimsicality. He traced his descent through the Hamiltons not only from several painters, but also from Nance Oldfield, the celebrated actress in the reign of Queen Anne.

At the Camberwell Library are preserved the registers of Miss Pace's school, containing my brother's name and that of an older boy with whom he was destined to clash in after years – Joseph Chamberlain.

His precocious intelligence as regards foreign affairs is indicated by an essay on Franco-German relations which was kept as something of a curiosity by one of the masters at Stockwell Grammar School.

At the same period, that is to say, at the age of fourteen, Harry demonstrated very strikingly his life-long interests in African wild life and in art. Looking still younger than his years (for he was never big in inches) he excited the amused admiration of keepers, visitors and the highest officials at the Zoo by the zest and skill with which he painted the biggest and most ferocious subjects. In 1873 he writes to his father in Turkey about a picture he had done of a lion 'about half the size of life.' One wonders how the little artist carried his canvas about! Very soon he tells how a military gentleman who had been watching him gave him his card with grave courtesy and became the first of his many clients. He appears to have spent much of the pocket money thus earned on birds, another lifelong love of his.

His parents evidently feared lest this early effort to come into close touch with African big game would lead him into danger from the less tractable of his subjects, for I find he wrote to his mother in 1874:

> 'Sweetest Darling, my own pet! Don't be distressed about the rhinoceros. I couldn't get near it if I wanted to.'

Professor Garrod, observing him at work, easily induced him to study animal anatomy scientifically, by dissecting dead specimens at the Zoo. While at King's College and an Art School he showed equal

aptitude for this work, for painting, and for the study of modern languages. His early study of animal anatomy helps to account for his realistic and accurate portrayal in art of the muscles and movements of wild creatures. To this he joined a passion even in his boyhood for visiting, describing and often painting beautiful landscapes, and seemed to teach himself from nature as much as he learnt at the South Lambeth Art School.

Our father owned some scattered bits of land in South London. Both he and our mother were devoted to gardening and greenhouse culture; so, as the houses crowded around them and lost their early suburban spaciousness, they moved a little further away from the City, into what had but recently been country, and still retained hay fields, fine trees and open spaces, with a view, but little obstructed, of the Crystal Palace, then at its zenith. This seemed to crystallize indeed for us Victorian art, pre-historic and modern Natural History, music, and even the theatre, with such an aroma of Albertine goodness about it that it was the one and only place where we were allowed to see a play. Wherever my father moved he went in for what would now be called landscape gardening which a vinery, conservatories and exotic trees made interesting even in foggy winters. There was always room for Harry's studio and a private zoo in which he was the predominant partner. From time to time he added such creatures to it as cranes and gazelles, which would sometimes peck or butt the unsteady baby of the family, whose earliest remembrances of Harry's hobbies are therefore startlingly distinct.

William de Morgan has described to the life the Victorian upper middle class family in the palmy days of the London suburbs. Ours was pretty true to type, with the addition of a very strong religious influence exercised by our father. His piety, though its phraseology would startle people nowadays, had not the slightest suspicion of a pose. He had a jolly sense of humour, though it lacked some of the nuances of Harry's, and we escaped the worst rigours of Victorian Neo-Puritanism. Though theatres and Catholic churches were bracketed as out of bounds, private theatricals, in which Harry always took the lead, were encouraged. Only on Sunday was lightsome music considered indecorous, and then Harry made it a fine art to play frivolous airs with such slow solemnity as not to disturb his father's absorption in the *Church Times*. Despite the prohibition of recognized games, Sunday afforded us plenty of amusement when Harry was at home. For years he kept up a rhymed and illustrated family chronicle in which he caricatured delightfully some very quaint relations and friends. It was dangerous sport, for his cartoons were apt to come under the notice of those who, to quote Queen Victoria's awful verdict, 'were not amused'.

Here is a gem of sanctimonious provocation from a very Victorian lady, written to him when he was just seventeen:

'My dear Harry:

I feel I must say one word about the sketch left in the Brewery office. S– bids me say it is ingenious. I go further, and say it is profane!! Oh,

Harry! Your whole profession is so high, belonging to a body whose hourly hope is the coming of the Lord! You, who are an acolyte in that body.... You to go trifling with Heaven and Hell! What are holy services without a corresponding holiness of life? Nothing but mockery, sheer mockery! Are there not plenty of funny things on earth to caricature without going to the Book of Revelation and making light of the sacred symbols of golden harp and crown, and putting them on your own hand and head? Is there not a fund of amusement from which you can draw innocent fun without going to that awful place reserved for the Devil and his angels, and representing God's greatest enemy as rollicking with delight at the capture of *one* and enticing with glee *another* of your fellow creatures! For shame, Harry! It makes me shiver to think of this irreverence for sacred things from *you*, brought up as you have been! I will say no more, though there is much to be said, except when you pray ask God to forgive you, and to give you a heart to *fear* Him. Those who love you most will not so much desire that you may be clever, but that you may fear and love God.'

This voluminous 'one word', which I have had to curtail to avoid nauseating my readers, must have intimidated Harry into an apology for depicting his small self in angelic guise, for his correspondent's exclamation marks, italics and the 'maggots of corrupted texts' diminish somewhat in her next letter. His inspiration was probably the *Ingoldsby Legends,* which shocked some of our elders the more because its author was a clergyman in the vanguard of revolt against the

dreary and priggish Calvinism in which they had had the misfortune to be brought up.

But in his mother Harry had the embodiment of reverence, self-sacrifice and loving comprehension. Her premature death when he was only nineteen was in every way a great shock and loss to him. With no premonition of his impending loss, he had written to her in 1876:

'My sweet Mother:

I cannot quench the intense longing to go abroad, to travel, that is upon me. I find a certain pleasure in reading the tours planned in my Bradshaw, and in planning others for myself.'

She easily induced his father as an eighteenth birthday present to finance Harry's travels to wherever fancy took him. Perhaps he knew the French proverb that Africa begins at the Pyrenees, for he chose Spain.

In July he wrote:

'My darling Mother:

Palma is without exception the most beautiful town I have ever seen, and the hottest. The best time to see it is in the rays of the declining sun, a city of pure white rising out of a deep blue sea, with green palms and semi-tropical vegetation, and a background of purplish hills, which to me, who have never seen any bigger than those of the Wye Valley, seem stupendous.'

Mountains always moved him, and he made haste to conquer his first, the Puig Mayor, a mild foretaste of Kilimanjaro, the Cameroons, Elgon and Ruwenzori.

After a time, he managed with the help of his French, Italian and Castilian Spanish to understand the very distinct language of the Balearic Islands. With characteristic zest for linguistic definition, he writes:

> 'The following recipe is how to make it: To one-half Spanish add one-quarter Italian, one-eighth French, one-sixteenth of Arabic and the same of almost pure Latin. Stir all well together with a decoction of Catalan, and you will get Mallorquin.'

Here is an impression of some of his casual travelling companions:

> 'There were two pretty country girls in the diligence to whom I was a never-ceasing object of wonder and admiration. They made the freest remarks about me, which now and then I was able to understand. They could never sufficiently admire my watch and were always asking me the time. Then my umbrella was folded up and unfolded, and my serge suit vastly admired. In return, they gave me one of their delicious little loaves and a glass of cool, crystal water every time we stopped.
>
> I also made the acquaintance of a Mallorquin wag – the worst type of wag – an old wag! When one of the young ladies went to sleep he tickled her nose with a piece of paper and said that I had done it! Of course she looked very offended. Then he stole her fan and placed it on my lap, but I indignantly returned it. His last trick was less successful. The young lady had gone to sleep again and he leant forward to kiss her, and would evidently have imputed the deed to me; but fortunately the fair

Mallorquina awoke in time and dealt him a sound smack in his face, which had a cooling effect on his waggishness.'

Valencia fully roused the artist in him, and he writes of it:

'Everything seems designed for effect: a house painted pale green, with large purple-grey blinds, each with two broad scarlet stripes; a woman leaning out of a balcony, dressed in black and yellow. The Cathedral pure Gothic, the Exchange pure Moorish.'

He found Grenada 'fairyland'–

'. . . the grandest cathedral I have ever seen. I am entranced with the Sala de Murillo and the Cigar Factory with its picturesque women at work. I have found friends here (I was known to half Seville before leaving). The upper classes here have Anglomania.'

Chance companions made him share their luncheon baskets, and he was charmed with all the Spaniards excepting their wolfish railway porters. All admired his English venturesomeness in travelling alone. (He must have looked a babe at eighteen, for, meeting him after his first Central African journey, six years later, Ferdinand de Lesseps, then basking in the fame of the Suez Canal, exclaimed 'Quel pays, où même les petits enfants sont des explorateurs!')

His warmest friends in Grenada were two Spanish boys fresh from Stonyhurst, who exclaimed 'You're English! What a lark!' and carried him off to their Moorish palace, where he did a painting of a beautiful

patio. He was evidently made very much at home, in a manner surprising to those who always think of Spaniards as exclusive people, for he writes:

> 'I strum remorselessly on their piano, and the coachman has learnt to play my tunes on the guitar. Don't look surprised, for the footman, gardener, porter and cook play frequently on that instrument.'

Harry regretfully left Spain, for which he always retained an affection and respect, never diminished by a gradually widening acquaintance with Spanish culture. On his way home he made his first call at Lisbon, which he was next to visit in a Diplomatic capacity. He stayed there long enough to improve his knowledge of Portuguese, which he had studied at King's College.

His enthusiasm for the Romance languages and their literature led him to study the language of the Troubadors in Provence in 1878, while at the same time he was engaged in painting bits of old Avignon and the beautiful Rhône Valley. He had worked hard as a Royal Academy student, and was already an exhibitor, while still in his 'teens. But he broke away from the then artificial standards of the London and Paris Art Schools, preferring to make studies from nature by himself. In a letter to his father he describes how this was frustrated at Avignon by the unconscious fascination he continued to exercise over strangers. At that early age he was evidently too polite to show antipathy in cases where admiration was not reciprocal.

> 'A dreadful old gentleman' (he complains), 'evincing a great liking for "Ze Angleesh", and finding

me outwardly polite, took a great fancy to me. He insisted on constituting himself my cicerone. He made himself doubly hateful by borrowing my precious umbrella in the noon of a scorching day, under the impression that if *he* held it it would shade us both. He was a man of huge bulk, and I had either to cling to the arm of his greasy coat and be jogged to a jelly or walk by myself in the broiling sun. After dinner, by moonlight, it would have been perfectly heavenly alone, the air thick with the ineffable scent of pine groves by the banks of the Rhône; but he roared out vapid reflections on the *"Moyen Age"* till I felt an awful temptation to push him into the dark water under the trees and say nothing about it. He insisted on my going with him on Sunday to Barbeutane. It was a place of almost startling beauty, and alone I should have enjoyed it to the full, with its magnificent view of the basin of the Rhône and glittering Avignon of the Popes. We had a magnificent breakfast, for which my companion requested me to pay, as he had left his purse at home. There were excessively nice peasants, and I drew the portrait of one of their children. The mother went into raptures over it, and I became a general favourite. They took a pleasure in instructing me in the Provençal idiom, surprised to find I took an interest in it. But the room, though apparently very clean, abounded in fleas, and I caught half-a-dozen. . . . What struck me most was the quantity of magnificent butterflies up here and the immense masses of oleanders, with a single pink blossom like a wild rose.'

And then he passes through botany to the history of the place, showing already while painting a portrait

and learning a language simultaneously that capacity to live a double life (in a very praiseworthy sense!) which he maintained to the end. This narration of trivialities seems to me worth while as revealing his character, already formed. That umbrella! It was to be his standard in battle as well as his constant companion. He was depicted with it in a *Punch* cartoon, and if he had persisted in politics it would have been established as his public badge, like Joseph Chamberlain's eyeglass, Mr. Baldwin's pipe, or Winston Churchill's peculiar taste in hats.

He remained throughout his life as sensitive alike to beauty and bores, to butterflies and fleas! His letters from Southern Europe are indeed terribly flea-bitten. Once bitten while sketching the interior of a cathedral (and suspecting an acolyte off duty who was leaning with interest over his shoulder) he maintained ever afterwards that Catholic churches bred the worst biters, though he very rarely put his assertion to the test. In this he was impartial, for as Protestant churches invariably seemed to give him headaches and fainting fits he was equally abstemious in attending them.

CHAPTER II

In the 'seventies people still put something of their true soul into their diaries, and I find some rather touching entries in Harry's when he was twenty. Ambition and travel had by then become the only anodyne to the bitter grief which he felt at his mother's death. Spurred by the Royal Academy's acceptance of his Provençal picture, *'Plait-il?'*, he competed for the Turner Gold Medal, and thus expresses his mind, after hearing that he had not won the coveted award:

> 'I wonder who will ultimately be the greater: myself or the successful competitors? Hard work is, I am afraid, the only test. Oh, if I could only be famous some day or another! . . . Sat up late last night reading old letters. I seemed to fancy the dear lost ones live again. My *pretty* mother, how I long for you. . . . I am so anxious to be great, and I have so often noticed that great men keep diaries in which they unbosom themselves in the most prolix manner. Slowly this terrible gap which embittered a whole year, though it cannot be filled, is being disguised and skinned over. Ah, how I *do* hope my trip to Tunis may be a success!'

He was literally sickening in England, and felt that Tunis, and not a University, was to be the touchstone of his career. He went as an artist, but he already doubted whether as such he could satisfy his ambition.

Tunis is still the nearest bit of 'East' to England

by the route which he took through France to Marseilles. Spurning hotels, he rented rooms looking on to the patio of a Moorish house in a labyrinth of bazaars and tunnelled alleys redolent of old Bagdad and the Arabian Nights.

The Tunisians are a kindly, tolerant folk now, but in those days there was still enough Moslem fanaticism among them to make it not only difficult but actually dangerous for an Englishman to paint their venerated Mosque of the Olive Tree, as yet untrodden by Christian feet. When Harry brought his easel and an ambitiously big canvas to its marble steps he was jostled and threatened with sticks and stones. But he had set his mind on painting this famous mosque, and had his first trial of strength with an African crowd. From the memory of after years I am able myself to reconstruct the scene of his youthful triumph. It was but a short way from what in the future was to be his own Consulate General, where, as his Secretary nineteen years later I caught typhoid in my thirsty search among its archives for some Pepys MSS. (These have since been published, and contain records of our Caroline connection with this ancient resort of 'Turkey' merchants and of Barbary pirates.)

The flat, whitewashed roofs and billowing domes of Tunis shine so white as to justify its title of the Prophet's Bournous. But to reach the centre of the native city you have to pass from dazzling sunlight to the vaulted gloom of canopied colonnades, by nail-studded doors guarding the mystery of shuttered and latticed fortress-houses, nearly or quite meeting overhead. Here, as I remember it, the pure white radiance

was broken up into rainbow streams of the kaleidoscopic crowd. Most prominent, by reason of their bulk, in billowing Mediaeval dress, were Jewesses, maintaining the traditions of their ancestors, who came to nearby Carthage when it was the world's greatest mart. Gauntly handsome Bedouin women, unveiled and bare-legged, came in laden with produce from the country, leading or driving goats, asses and camels. Muhammadan women of the town in those days went veiled, and sombrely shrouded. But their men folk ran through all the gamut of colours, rejoicing especially in orange and azure. Those who had visited the Holy Places proudly wore turbans of the pilgrims' green, but for the most part the predominance of the scarlet fez gave to a dense crowd the aspect of a field of poppies.

The noise and the smells were as pronounced as the colours. A haughty janizary, striding ahead of a European or native dignitary, would loudly command right of way, and enforce it on small boys by belabouring them with a cucumber snatched from the counter of a date-seller's booth.

Some of the wares, such as fish, cheese or onions, would shout for themselves. Pleasanter perfumes percolated from Morocco leather and from the Street of the Scent Makers, whose precious distilled essences might be worth £1 a bottle smaller than half your thumb. Their dignified vendors offered you, while chafering patiently for their price, Turkish coffee heated over charcoal in what looked like the bowls of huge tobacco pipes. Add to these varied distractions half-naked porters, beggars and swarms of flies, and

it will be conceded that for a boyish artist to sit before a very big canvas, painting a shrine, with human figures in the foreground, dead against the strict old-time canons of Islamic imagophobia was a bold and difficult venture.

He records in his diary how a fanatical beggar sprang at him and was only restrained from violence by Moorish shopkeepers, who pulled the crazy scare-crow away and made the English boy move on.

But his retreat was only a momentary and strategic one. He made the acquaintance of Muhammad el Sherif, the religious Primate of Tunis, and actually induced this dignified old gentleman to pose for his portrait on the steps of his Mosque of the Olive Tree – a display of moral courage on both sides. Thenceforth, the only inconvenience the innovator experienced was that of friendly curiosity.

The resulting picture was nevertheless one of Harry's few artistic failures, as regards exhibition, and occupied much wall space in our dining-room. Yet it was while working upon it in his improvised studio that his brooding ambition took the form of a definite resolution which was to mould his own life and the destiny of many others. Years afterwards, he wrote to Sir Percy Anderson, Permanent Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs:

> 'Up to the age of twenty-one I was a vague painter-student of delicate health, or at any rate a sufficient appearance of such to justify me in extracting from my father continual subsidies which I devoted to delightful rambles in Mediterranean countries – not altogether profitless, since they

taught me the Latin languages and Arabic. I was passionately fond of painting, yet did not wish to follow it as a career. I had strong leanings to science, and had almost decided to go to Cambridge and take up Natural Science as my profession: when a certain event occurred – the fall of the Beaconsfield Ministry. I was in Tunis at the time, and in my twenty-first year. For some time I had taken an increasing interest in foreign politics, and the idea of Gladstone's advent to power, pledged by his speeches to withdraw from Candahar and to give up Cyprus – filled me with such dismay and regret that I said to myself, "Why, if you take such an intense interest in the Empire, not become yourself an active agent for its extension?"

I resolved that I would, and the whole tenor of my life has been changed by the resolution taken that morning under the Moorish arcades of my dirty but picturesque abode in Tunis. During 1881 my knowledge of Tunisian affairs introduced me to the London Press as a writer.'

His knowledge of Tunisian affairs was gathered in ways possible to no other Englishman at the time. He painted the portrait of the Grand Vizier of the Bey. This man, Mustafa ben Ismain, was just one of those Court favourites of humble origin, engaging manners and unscrupulous mind who worm their way to the front in every Oriental despotism. He was of Jewish origin, and, like all the Jews of Tunis, thoroughly Oriental. With their natural detachment from devotion to a Government which has treated them badly as a race, he was plotting with the French for their invasion of Tunisia. Harry made a note in his

diary of the cruelty which lurked in his handsome features. He took a keen interest in the 1880 Election in England, was a warm admirer of his bigger and better prototype, Lord Beaconsfield, and much concerned at his retirement from politics. 'Why,' he asked, 'did he not while in power have Mr. Gladstone strangled?'

Women were concerned in more than half of the intrigue in these last days of Tunisian independence, and the Grand Vizier prided himself in emulating Solomon's uxoriousness. These presumably fascinating meddlers and intermediaries in affairs of state were of mixed and varied nationalities. Some of the most formidable of them were in the pay of the French, who have proverbially and historically known how to search for and use their influence in secret diplomacy since the days of our witty but too susceptible Charles II. Some of these favourites were still their pensioners when we were in Tunis twenty years later. The word went round that they should be considered as historic, and, as such, suitable for the drawing-rooms of the most *comme il faut,* no matter how strongly they were scented with musk.

Harry's next two sitters for portraits were the Commandant of the nearest portion of the projected French army of invasion, and a bandit who was the eagerly accepted excuse for that army. In his diary my brother describes him as 'the chief of a band of robbers which has just been caught. This man, who had all the flesh taken off his right thigh, had killed himself some forty individuals. They will all be shot – the robbers, I mean – the day after to-morrow.'

In the early summer of 1880 Harry had left the city of intrigue for the scene of action, in what he termed 'an African Switzerland' on the borders of Tunisia and Algeria. Here a French army was in waiting at the head of a strategic railway from Algeria, with a Tunisian one facing it and a band of these Krumir robbers in between.

Nothing could have been kinder than the French officers' entertainment of their unexpected guest. Harry's coming of age was appropriately staged where the curtain was lifting for the great drama of the Scramble for Africa. Camping under shelters of branches among cool woods and streams, with friendly, witty and appreciative companions, he owns himself in his diary happier than he had been for a long time past. All his interests were now stirred. For the first time he saw lions wild, of the breed shipped from Carthage to Rome for the bloody shambles of the arena, but since his first visit to Tunis, extinct in North Africa. He painted the Red deer (found no further south than this) and a specimen of the leopards which may still linger in these un-African looking highlands, which round about Fedj Kelba are covered with forests of cork oak and profusely flowering genista. The French gave him the live young of hyaenas and gazelles brought in by Arab hunters. He saved and reared one of the gazelles by finding it a nanny-goat foster-mother. He also kept a very varied aviary, and brought all these birds and beasts with him when he returned home later in 1880.

As though to encourage his boyish resolution to play a political part in the world's unfolding history,

the Bey, as one of the last of his acts as an independent sovereign, bestowed on him the Order of the Nizam, and the now defunct, but then very much alive *Globe* newspaper, made him its correspondent in the theatre of the French invasion which was the first move in the European partition of Africa in our times. My brother then and always championed the moral claim of France to take up the old civilizing work of Rome in North Africa and to beat back the desert which had spread so disastrously under Muhammadan misrule, deforestation and neglect of irrigation. He foretold the final French coup in Tunis while it was still unsuspected by the British Consul General there, or by the Italians, who, on the strength of their large colonies in the Regency, so near their own shores, were aspiring to supersede the nominal Turkish suzerainty over the bankrupt and feeble government of the Bey. Foreseeing Italy's as yet undeclared expansionist tendencies and the strength to which they have now attained, my brother argued in the Press the advisability of allowing the two Latin rivals to balance each other on opposite sides of the strategically important straits in the middle Mediterranean on either side of Malta, just as we have since kept a balance of French and Spanish power on the Straits of Gibraltar.

Before definitely giving up art as a career and returning to Africa, Harry established his reputation as a painter. He spent a busy but delightful summer at the chateau of the Vicomte de Roumefort, whose son was one of the friends he had made in Tunis. Here, at Vervant, on the wooded banks of the River Boutonne, the house party more or less lived in their

bathing clothes, and Harry painted three pictures which were accepted by the Royal Academy. His hosts were staunch Royalists and Catholics, and he remarked with surprise that he felt particularly drawn to the French country clergy. 'Not one that I met,' he remarks, 'failed to be interesting,' especially some retired missionaries from Africa.

The real Africa beyond the Sahara was drawing him with an irresistible allurement. He had no sooner returned to England than he began the greatest study of his life – that of the Bantu languages, the predominant form of speech in all the southern half of Africa. He started this laborious study at the British Museum from Bleek's works, with an immediate reason for his then quite unusual form of research: he had received a hint that he might be asked to accompany Lord Mayo on a shooting trip to Angola, since his knowledge of Portuguese, Botany and Natural History made him a desirable travelling companion in that part of South-West Africa. Final plans were made at a luncheon party with Lord Mayo in January, 1882, and in April that year they sailed.

CHAPTER III

An embryo explorer's first impressions of Tropical Africa may be worth quoting, to show how much in love with it he was at first sight, how unchanging is its scenery, and how much changed is everything else. Most happy among the changes are the intemperate habits of British traders which did so much to give West Africa in the Eighteen-eighties the worst health record in the world.

Writing to his father of the Bonny River, a place of call for his expedition, to which he was destined to return as Acting Consul before long, he remarks:

> 'Full of interest to a Naturalist, to a trader Bonny is one of the most hateful places on the Coast. It is the old tale of Eyes and No Eyes.
>
> The steamer in which one arrives is anchored off some enormous hulk. These hulks were once great East Indiamen sailing vessels which have sunk into being floating houses where cargo is stored and timid merchants live. X– is a pleasant old gentleman with a mottled nose, attributed by his friends to "the infernal climate". When you walk upstairs into his parlour you understand why the climate is so unhealthy. Here are some dozen men sitting boozing at ten o'clock on a lovely Sunday morning. Question these residents of the West Coast, and you will find them crassly ignorant of everything outside the sale of their wares. To their dull eyes the feast of beauty round them is unmeaning. "D'you think *I'm* goin' muckin' about in

them forests? Catch me at it! On'y get snakes or fever or summink. Out of Cap'n X–'s parlour I don't stir till I'm obliged." And so we leave them after borrowing some Kruboy servants as guides and *steeds,* for we shall have to cross a marshy lagoon on their broad backs. . . .

At last in the forest! Oh, how beautiful it is! Great towering cottonwood trees, bigger than the biggest oaks, often sixty feet without a branch to break their symmetrical stems. Or they may be tapestried from top to bottom with wreaths of parasitic ferns. Their immense roots form diverging walls six feet high, between which the natives often stall their little cows. There are clusters of graceful cocoanut palms with clusters of ripening nuts among their feathery plumes. In the middle of the forest is Bonny, an orderless mass of wattle and daub huts, numbers of pretty little goats acting as scavengers, stunted, querulous fowls no bigger than bantams, and a lot of babies, with great black eyes, yellow skins and protuberant stomachs. Some of them cried out with glee at our approach and others ran away and hid in corners. The spring where the Bonny people got their water was a pretty spot, a still, green pool in the middle of a grove of umbrageous trees. Its surface was dappled with water-lilies and just touched by branches of trees and hanging creepers and lianas. Bronze-coloured women with gaudy waist-cloths came down, fifty at a time, to fill their pitchers and afterwards wind back through the forest.'

The next day he made his first acquaintance with the Old Calabar River, then 'the portal of unexplored Africa,' which he was himself to explore and adminis-

ter later, and eagerly made a large collection of butterflies. Further south, their party stopped at the Gaboon to enjoy 'the genial hospitality of French missionaries', and here Harry made his first big batch of sketches for the *Graphic*. This paper, under the able direction of the Thomas family, from that time onwards always paid my brother such a good price for his illustrations and articles as to enable him to be self-supporting on his often self-chosen journeys.

After a lift for some hundreds of miles further on a British warship, he rejoined Lord Mayo and landed with him at Mossamedes. Here was a strip of arid, sandy country contrasting sharply with his first eager glimpses of West Africa. As it was infested with lions, the fact that they picked up an insensible white man in the sand and brought him to consciousness probably saved his life, and in so doing unknowingly fostered the establishment of German South-West Africa. For this mysterious individual, who gave his name as Captain Vischer, and hastened away as soon as able without further explanation, turned out to be the agent whom the Germans were employing for treaty making in their about-to-be proclaimed Protectorate – the first in date of their overseas possessions. We had ourselves annexed this forbidding-looking but possibly valuable country in the 'Seventies, and then disowned it, except for some guano islands and the port of Walfish Bay, till the Great War made it once more British.

There were not wanting signs in 1882 that the Scramble for Africa was quickening, and that Germany entertained great ambitions. Quite a drama was staged in the Congo basin, to the north-east of Angola,

and Harry made up his mind after accompanying Lord Mayo's shooting party for some distance through Portuguese territory, to find out by himself what there was behind it and what was being done. The embryo Congo Free State, financed by King Leopold of Belgium, was as yet only an International Society, but Stanley, at its head, was turning from an explorer into a great Governor. Yet the soldier-adventurer in him was already racing the French champion, De Brazza, for political possession of the great Congo, while as a diplomatist he was foiling the German members of his Comité d'Etudes du Haut Congo in their schemes to procure its control by their own country.

So Harry's desires soon outran the bounds of a shooting party with Lord Mayo. After having journeyed three hundred miles inland with him, he struck out alone, with very little money, painting his way, as it were, from one European trading station or mission to another. The trend of his wanderings was to find and meet, wherever he might be, and despite the determined opposition of the Germans and their Dutch sympathizers, the great Stanley, whose actions, methods, and rumoured intentions were the theme of public discussion, in which hope, suspicion, criticism and admiration contended.

Europeans travelling in these then very little known regions invariably belonged to one or other of four easily distinguished classes – the official, the missionary, the trader or the sportsman. To all of these Harry must have offered a curious contrast in those days. Painting was still his ostensible object, though it was really but a means to an end. It served to disarm

suspicion and pay his way, as we see by the following letter which he wrote to his father in October, 1882:

'I do hope my pictures may be sold. One success, one act of notoriety – let me only cross Africa – and they will go off at twice their value. In the meantime I could not be living cheaper or to greater advantage. I *am* so happy, and have never been so unailing in my life. Do you know how much I have spent since landing in Africa last May? Remember, I have reached the borders of Ovampoland, have visited the great Cunene River, thoroughly explored the Chella Mountains and have been 250 miles up the Quanza. I have a hundred sketches and two thick books with notes on Natural History. I have an exceptionally fine collection of plants and birds, and how much do you think it has cost me? Four Pounds only – and spent in buying curiosities, giving tips, and the little etceteras of daily life. In Africa, when a traveller with a civil tongue is also an artist, ordinary kindness gives way to enthusiastic hospitality and everything is done to aid him and save his purse. I have been the guest of Englishmen, French, Portuguese, Dutch, Swedes, Belgians, Germans and even Negroes. For three weeks I was an indulged guest on a man-of-war, living like a petted child for nothing, whilst Lord Mayo was charged the regulation pound a day. The Boers lent me horses for nothing. The Portuguese Governor of Mossamedes sent me to Loanda in a Portuguese man-of-war, charged me nothing for my passage, and described me as a "distinguished personage" in his official letter. I have just returned from a journey of five hundred miles as the guest of the Quanza Navigation Company.

This expedition cost me exactly 7/-. I am very hard worked, and think it is that which keeps me so well. I study Portuguese and the native languages, ride, boat, fish, shoot.'

It is probable that a lot of the kindness shown to Harry in those early days, and always gratefully recorded, was really due to his appearance of extreme youth and the contrast displayed by his startling precocity mingled with disarming frankness and enthusiasm. Grim merchant princes who ruled their 'factories' quite despotically, and were not by any means always England's friends, unbent towards him. He admits himself with some distress at this time that he could not manage to look more than seventeen. In the following year, a newspaper reporter, with perhaps some humorous exaggeration, described 'the latest African traveller' as 'a little slip of a boy, apparently fifteen years of age, with a pleasant smile and intelligent blue eyes, a little more than five feet in height, and a chin tapering to a point and contrasting strongly with the broad jaw behind. In reality he is twenty-four, but talks as if he were fifty-two.' This reporter must have been colour-blind, for my brother's eyes were always a peculiar magnetic green, and when I was with him in Uganda the natives on that account called him 'The Lion'. His earliest native nickname on the Congo, however, was 'Spider', because of his keenness to catch insects for his scientific collections. But both names portrayed his habitually alert and watchful attitude.

Having said goodbye to Lord Mayo on the Kunene River and pushed into the interior alone by a series

of zigzag routes to districts which seemed worth investigation from a Natural History or geographical point of view, Harry finally doubled back to the Congo estuary and tried to ascend the river. He was told that the redoubtable Stanley was dying. The German section of his Committee had withdrawn to Vivi, where they tried their best to prevent the inquisitive young Englishman from ascending the river further. They asserted that Germany was going to take over the Congo. The head of the Dutch trading firm (their ally against Stanley) put Harry on a steamer with strict injunctions to the Captain to land him at a Portuguese trading post down stream, about twenty miles from the sea.

From this place, with the help of the friendly Portuguese, he doubled back again up stream in one of their boats, eluded the jealous vigilance of the Germano-Dutch clique, and called at Boma, where he met the accomplished Negro wife of George Grenfell, the eminent Baptist missionary-explorer, whose Life he afterwards wrote.

At Underhill my brother was warned not to show himself at Vivi or he would be stopped and sent back. So he left the river and made a détour, parallel with it, obstinately heading up stream, and determined to baffle those who would head him back from the interior of that cockpit of international jealousy theoretically governed by the Comité d'Etudes du Haut Congo. But the climate proved itself a worse bar to his progress than the anti-British clique who wished to prevent his communicating with Stanley. The rains of Equatorial Africa were at their height; the porters fell sick; and

the village chiefs levied rapacious tolls on the white wayfarer, who had to pay at the rate of £1 a mile. Sooner than waste his father's advance of funds in this manner, Harry reluctantly retraced his steps to the river at Underhill. But not even the friendly Baptists there were able to abate the greed of the village head-men.

But at this time of difficulty and frustration, as later in his career, Harry displayed a happy facility for turning aside from the worrying problem of the moment – without abandoning the project – and immersing himself in a multitude of other interests, and then returning to his original aim with renewed energy. He wrote at this time that he was working twelve hours a day at sketching, Natural History and linguistic studies for newspaper articles and his first book, *The River Congo*.

Between work, he was a ravenous though discriminating reader and a gourmet in good living as regards food. His fine sense of taste was of little satisfaction to him where alcohol was concerned, for, except in cases of prostration, he never took it in any form or approved of its being taken in Africa. His advice to African trading companies employing Europeans was 'Send out plenty of books. The mind in Africa runs more risk of being starved than the body, for those to whom the country itself does not seem a great book. Homesickness and depression are best diverted not by constant sips of spirits but by bright novels. Then, when the lamp is lit the European can forget the strange things outside – the riotous dancers, gleaming with perspiration round their fires – in the beautiful creations and merry thoughts of our master

minds.' This advice was founded on his own constant practice. His letters home frequently enclose orders for the latest books, sometimes specified, at other times left guardedly to the discretion of the senders, with such provisos as 'Never send anything written by a clergyman or by a woman writer, except Miss Braddon,' a lady whom he had met and greatly appreciated in those far back days before such brilliant writers as 'Elizabeth', Rose Macaulay, or Rebecca West shone above the literary horizon.

But, ravenous bookworm though he was, Harry was always in the first place a reader of life and living people around him. At this time he got his own back from his native extortioners by making a study of them. At Manyanga the local 'king' was a truculent looking individual in a bowler hat and nothing else. My brother found him feasting with his sub-chief, whose wife he was nevertheless supposed to have killed by sorcery. But wives were cheap hereabouts, for it was at this place that Harry had the handsome offer made to him of a very stout lady whom her relatives were anxious to dispose of on easy terms for her value in blue beads. At Kinshasha an old gentleman brought him his two daughters in the hope of exchanging them for a few 'longs' of cloth. When this proposal fell flat, he hauled forward his wife, whose maturer style of beauty he felt certain could not fail to please. Such people could understand the lives of the primitive Israelites as translated for them by the earnest Baptist missionaries, but at that time and place it was questionable to Harry if they absorbed much real Christianity. He relates in his book, *The River Congo:*

'When the missionary holds a service at King Kongo-Mpaka's house, some twenty or thirty idlers look in, in a genial way, to see what is going on. They imitate with the exact mimicry which only the Negro possesses, our gestures and actions, so that a hasty observer would conclude that they were really touched. They kneel with abandon, clasp their hands, and say Amen with deep ventral enthusiasm. The king constantly took up the end of some phrase in the sermon and repeated it with patronizing interest after the missionary, just to show he was attending, throwing meanwhile a furtive glance at his wives, who were not pursuing their avocations outside with sufficient diligence. After the concluding prayer, the king rose from his knees and promptly demanded the loan of a handscrew to effect some alteration in his canoe.'

Just after my brother's enforced return to Underhill, Stanley himself arrived there by boat and sent him an invitation to come and see him. He went with considerable trepidation, for Stanley's detractors had said that an introduction to him would prove a painful humiliation – that he would say 'Who are you?' or 'What do you want?' and then turn on his heel.

Harry may have thought there was safety in numbers, for on the occasion of his call some important chiefs with a crowd of followers were holding a palaver with 'Bula Matadi'. He paused involuntarily to look at the group, for Stanley had not seen his approach as he sat benignly chatting and smoking with the native chiefs, his face lighting up with amusement at their naïve remarks. Then Stanley turned suddenly and saw his shy visitor, and, meeting

and welcoming him cordially, led him to a chair, not even waiting for a formal introduction. Dismissing the chiefs, who eyed the new-comer curiously, under the belief that he was Stanley's son, the great explorer and the boy who would be one plunged straight into a lifelong friendship. To the end of Stanley's life the two remained constant correspondents on intimate terms.

Stanley asked him to dinner, and they remained talking together far into the night. All Harry's transport and other travelling difficulties, except those of Nature, vanished, for Stanley lent him trusted Zanzibari men and the glamour of his supposed paternity in the eyes of the natives. He offered, indeed, to take him with him, and, alternatively, to enrol him in the service of the nascent Free State for three years. He gave him letters of introduction which smoothed his way everywhere.

Stanley was contemplating re-adopting British nationality, and already had a wish to get into Parliament. He found in Harry a budding Imperialist of the quite new kind. This much feared, autocratic Governor of a great savage African state, accused of violence towards violent natives, of brutality of manner towards Europeans: of direct action out of date in Europe, proved himself the gentlest, most considerate and most appreciative of friends to a youngster half his age, who, for all his suavity of manner, was, even in those days, given to laying down the law. The truth was that the two were mutually attracted as much by their contrasts as by their points of agreement. Both had great force of character, but the elder man lacked

the younger's *suaviter in modo*. Stanley's was by far the simpler character, and, since simplicity is one of the most telling marks of greatness, he made a greater appeal to the 'man in the street'.

Stanley had popularized Africa and revealed it in the rough. The friend on whom his mantle seemed to fall never really wrote in a popular vein, and was too late to absolutely discover any of the main features of Africa. Yet my brother nevertheless made it his life's work to complete Stanley's great initial discoveries in a manner – thoroughly scientific and exact – altogether foreign to Stanley's capabilities. When some of the world's greatest waterways were being revealed by Stanley; when he was blasting his way through the rocky barriers which separated the known from the unknown, it did not really matter that he carelessly alluded to antelopes as 'deer'. If anyone else had been guilty of such a crime in Natural History he would have been anathema to Harry, to whom scientific truth was almost the only truth worth bothering about. When I saw the two men together in after years in England, Stanley good-naturedly twitted my brother with being 'cynical', but he never doubted his earnestness, still less his scrupulousness. In the days of their earliest acquaintance, Stanley confided to this boy of twenty-three all the cares and crosses of his high office – the constant intrigues and slanders of which he was a victim, the rash judgments of many soidisant Liberals and Christians towards this wonderful man born in a workhouse, self-educated, self-made, and the maker of a new Africa, far happier and saner than the old. This

generation has forgotten the virulence with which Stanley was assailed and the slander, mingled with deceptive particles of truth, which caricatured his noble character.

But Harry in 1882 was in the midst of this controversy. My brother's mind was about as far removed from the brutal 'kick-the-nigger' type as it was from the lush sentimentality which characterized Exeter Hall. He would never have admired Stanley if Stanley had been the ruthless bully portrayed by his traducers – men whose corns of pomposity, ineptitude or fawning deceit he had trodden upon.

Of course there were occasions when Stanley in Central Africa used, or threatened to use, methods of persuasion not commonly applicable in England. For instance, not being able at that time to talk French fluently, he once asked my brother to translate to a disreputable and recalcitrant European employé a plain intimation that he would get a literal thrashing unless he did promptly and thoroughly what he was told to do. The man answered defiantly *'Il n'ose pas!'* But looking up at Stanley's grim, stern face, he wisely went about his neglected job, with the sullen intimation to the young interpreter that he need not translate his last few words! It must not be forgotten that the men sent out to work under Stanley were not of his choosing. They were a very mixed lot, in nationality as well as in character, and remained so until the Congo became properly Belgian – the ward of a gallant nation, instead of the private domain of an absentee speculator-King, who was playing very cleverly for his own hand amidst a swirl of cross-

currents and purposes – philanthropic, Imperialist and exploitive.

Stanley accepted good-naturedly Harry's decision not to take service with him on the Congo, and after having enabled him to travel three hundred miles further into the interior he entrusted to his hands letters and MSS. for the *Daily Telegraph* to be delivered on his return home.

On July 9th, 1883, he wrote him the following letter:

'My dear Johnston:

I hasten to write lest a few words of mine will not catch you before you leave Angola. I am indebted to you mainly because I have enjoyed myself more in your company than I have done in anyone's for I don't know how long, and certainly your letters are the most amusing things I have read for a long time. Did you really step up to the big Dankel man and conquer him at last by your suavity? . . . I wish I had Tenniel or Leach's pencil to put you in an Eton boy's dress with the broad white linen collar and short jacket, smilingly receiving jams and sweet biscuits. The very thought of it makes me laugh.

I have made a journey of 900 miles since you left and have founded three stations up river, discovered and circumnavigated a new lake – Mantumbe. Not bad in fifty days? I have had a dozen fights in three days, but the odd figure and strange noises of the steamer kept them off.

Elliot has checkmated De Brazza very nicely. . . .

While closing, my dear Johnston, let me beg you to remember that there is one *at least* on the Congo

who will remind himself of the pleasant visitor at Stanley Pool always with pleasure.

I am, ever your most friendly,

HENRY M. STANLEY.'

'A dozen fights in three day!' I can imagine the last of Stanley's detractors exclaiming in horror. Well, when I was with Harry in the eastern part of the Congo Free State in after years I can remember his encountering an old chief who as a young man had fought against and afterwards with Stanley. He bore very emphatic testimony to the esteem with which Bula Matadi was still held in all the districts through which he had passed and over which he had ruled. This man's testimony was quite spontaneous, and contrasted favourably with his impressions of some other explorers.

When Stanley died I can remember my brother's caustic comments on the decision of the then Dean of Westminster that the great explorer and lawgiver should not be buried in the Abbey because he had been a man of blood, while statesmen and monarchs who with safety to themselves have sent thousands to the shambles are resting there with poets and saints!

At the time of receiving the above letter, Harry was writing to his father:

'I left Stanley about the 1st of May and journeyed quickly to the west. Do not imagine to find me an invalid. I have enjoyed such uniform health during my fifteen months in Africa that it has even impressed Stanley, who writes of me in one of his letters of introduction, in exaggerated kindness, I am bound to say, "I predict for him a brilliant

future, as good fortune meets him everywhere. This unsympathetic climate has specially favoured him, and the stubborn Batike have been kind to him in all his wanderings. . . . As Mr. Johnston can lay claim to being the first Englishman who has been up the Congo as far as Bolobo, a certain honour is due to him of which he can never be deprived, and you who have been noted for the consideration you have shown illustrious Africans will no doubt receive Mr. Johnston with the distinction he merits," etc., etc.

The truth is, it is only mentally really that I need repose. Anxious not to lose a detail of the wonders I have spread before me, I have felt in that condition which in my childhood was described as having your eyes larger than your stomach: simply incapable of mentally absorbing the numberless marvels of Nature. I want a few days, or I think a few hours would be enough, of the Camberwell New Road. The greatest antithesis you could find to Central Africa is the placidly ugly conventionality of that thoroughfare.'

This was the road in which was situated the church – a not unbeautiful one – of which his father, on retiring from the direction of his Insurance Company, had become a minister. The glowing interior of this ornate building, with its many altar lamps, its rather crudely tinted glass, gilded baldachino, diversely coloured vestments and fervid piety was itself a startling contrast to the mean shops and dun-brick, shabbily respectable houses surrounding it. Emerging from a peculiarly pungent fog of incense into the sulphurous fumes of lower London of the last decades of a van-

Library
Arizona State Museum

ished century was to pass from one world (in which our father habitually lived in thought) into quite another. Both of these were so alien to Harry's taste, trend and temperament, that by 'Camberwell New Road' he implied not only the antithesis of Africa but of himself.

These were some of the scenes with which he contrasted it. I draw from his journal and letters, bits of which may have appeared subsequently in the *Daily Telegraph* and in his Congo book.

> 'Nearly every Congo village is on a high hill. The path to it is arched over by immensely thick grass, ten and twelve feet high. It produces more loss of temper than anything in Africa. Continually pushing apart its intercrossed blades is very fatiguing, while one's face is scratched and tickled by its seeds and awns. It effectually shuts out all prospect of one's surroundings, and harbours snakes, buffaloes and hostile natives. I don't know a more despairing outlook on arriving at the top of a hill in Africa than to look down on a tract of waving grass.'

It is to be remembered that he was *walking* through five hundred miles of this. When traversing similar stretches of country with him subsequently, I appreciated, though mounted, the inconvenience of being soaked through with dew during the earlier hours of the march, and nearly stifled with the close, confined heat later in the day. This was such a commonplace of old-time African travel as scarcely to be considered worth mention. But it may be worth recalling now, when the opening up of motor roads and railways in

modern Equatorial Africa has almost relegated the primitive African single-file march into history, along with the Cape waggons and those that crossed America's prairies a century ago.

Fortunately it was not all grass. The valleys, as in nearly all Equatorial Africa, were filled with fine forests, whose grandly overarching trees gave most grateful shade in the heat of the day. These forest belts always afforded my brother such an aesthetic feast as to more than atone for the weary stretches in between. Shorn of a lot of rather erudite botany, here is one of his numerous mentions of them:

> 'Beside the path are beautiful cannas, with their crimson flower spikes and yellow-green leaves telling out strongly against the dark, purple-green foliage behind. . . . For absolute gorgeousness, nothing can compare with the diverse gourds . . . which when ripe split open to disclose their crimson interior, where black seeds are laid in tempting rows to invite the birds to assist in their distribution. The whole effect in floral colouring is to suggest a tremendous competition for the favourable notice of birds and insects, as if the flowers were advertising "Your patronage is earnestly solicited."'

This is how he lightened the toil of the march and maintained his good health and spirits in those early days:

> 'The rain began to hiss down, and the mosquitoes tormented me continually. With the adroitness that most uncivilized races possess of quickly lighting a fire, my men soon made a comforting blaze out of

the fragments of wet timber that lay around, and I had a steaming hot cup of coffee ready. I hollowed out a round space in the centre of the tent and filled it with red-hot wood ashes which diffused a grateful sense of dryness and at the same time routed the many insects.'

It must have been such resourcefulness as this, coupled with Harry's love of the wild and his acute powers of observation which induced Sir Robert Baden Powell many years afterwards to offer him his own most useful and honourable headship of the Scouts, an offer most regretfully declined for reasons of health.

There were advantages in being small, for next day he notes:

'I had to cross a series of black morasses on the shoulders of Faraji, who if he had ever heard recited in the cafés of Zanzibar the voyages of Sinbad the Sailor must have thought that I strongly resembled the Old Man of the Sea. The water in parts reached to Faraji's chest, and the footing was slimy and treacherous. When we reached the River Lulu it was in full flood and had swept away the suspension bridge of lianas. So I had to wait till the Zanzibaris arrived – for I always walked so quickly that I was invariably in advance of the caravan – and two of them carried me across. On the other side the universality of beauty in the forest filled me with delight. Delicious, penetrating scents embalmed the air. Little specks and dapplings of sunlight are scattered over the outer groups of foliage, but hesitate timidly before the great depths of solemn gloom in the heart of the forest. Almost every turn of the path introduces

you brusquely to a happy family of monkeys, who bound up at your approach and take refuge on large platforms or twigs on the upper branches. Green fruit pigeons startle you with their strange cry – a whirring noise, two or three clucks, and then a sweet and prolonged coo. Bee-eaters swoop in eccentric circles on the many flying insects. Hornbills sit in staid immobility, watching them as if they would like to imitate them but felt such great exertions unbecoming. . . . The trees bordering the water tremble and nod paralytically as the great current strikes against them. But higher up the foliage is massive and majestic, haughtily unmoved by the racing flood beneath. Below the great Isangila rapid, the harassed Congo breaks away into many little far-off bays where it seems to dally and rest among the wooded islets, smiling at the sky, and gently lapping the shores of its verdant archipelago.'

I have said that Harry was a gourmet in other things than beauty. Possibly because he took neither alcohol nor tobacco, he retained to the end of his life a very sweet tooth. His letters home at this time are like those of a schoolboy, constantly appealing for choice sweets. Failing home supplies, he showed a resourcefulness which again would have commanded him to the far future Boy Scouts: 'Take,' he says, 'nine or ten sticks of sugar cane, peel and cut them into small cubes. Mash to a pulp, and strain into a large pot. Mixed and cooked with the right proportion of ground-nut oil, this will give you a most toothsome toffee.'

He procured these ingredients at a native market,

where, under the shade of great trees, a thousand people were disposed in little chaffering groups, in which the women would haggle, scream and expostulate, and chuckle aside over their bargains whilst the hulking men lounged about in good-humoured listlessness. Their dogs were prick-eared and spotted yellow and white, exactly like those of a Noah's ark. The market people would call the European 'Son of the Sea', out of whose depths they believed he had come. Further inland he remarks that this generic term became 'Son of Heaven'.

Harry much preferred a native hut to sleep in to a tent, finding it cooler, drier and better ventilated. There were no fleas, but 'ware jiggers! Ever ready to try the native life and diet, he yet drew the line at bats, which are considered a delicacy round about Stanley Pool, and are caught on lines of string stretched between tall poles by the wayside, like rude imitations of telegraph lines.

Everywhere he recorded the customs of the natives, often with humour. At Lutete, a fetish man with young disciples was hopping like a frog to call down rain, while onlookers, conscious of the inutility of supplicating Providence, were reclining in postures of lazy ease, having their hair dressed by women.

Some of the girls in those unsophisticated days, when nakedness and innocence really did seem to go together, were charming little creatures. In many parts, until they reached a marriageable age, they ran about gaily, with nothing to enhance or hide their natural charm but a brass collar or copper anklets. One of these unspoilt daughters of the Wabuma took

a special fancy to the gentle-mannered white man. She constituted herself his guide, took his hand with the greatest confidence, and led him through the village to show him the sights. Seeing him gather flowers to preserve, she presented him with an armful which she had laboriously plucked, and later on pressed into his hand three newlaid eggs, which he sadly suspected she had stolen.

Harry's lack of self-consciousness delighted both the children and their elders. They would roar with laughter when in order to ascertain their name for a leopard he leapt and snarled to represent that animal.

Here is his pen picture of this, the most dreaded of all the beasts of the Congo basin: 'He stood in soft, grey-green shade, lapping the stream near where it fell in white streaks over the moss-carpeted stones. Long sprays of maidenhair tickled his forehead. Great knotted lianas bumped against him as the slight breeze swayed them backwards and forwards above the crisp white sand. Parrots mocked at him, and yellow-vented fly-catchers shrieked out his crimes. Still he laps with greedy thirst against a background of intensely vivid sunlit verdure where the forest breaks open to the sky. Then he softly slinks away into the untracked solitudes of dead, sombre green.' Harry painted just such a picture in water colour, only that the leopard was sleeping on a bough overhanging the stream. The glossy folds of its lithe muscles in repose looked instinct with life when the picture was hung on the walls of the Royal Academy.

Another Academy picture of his, completed much later, but begun by careful studies from life made on

the Congo was of crocodiles, half lying, half floating in the ooze, gaping listlessly while water-birds plumed themselves fearlessly within reach of the 'gently smiling jaws', ready to give cries of warning at the approach of man, while one of them, in still closer alliance with the saurians, illustrated a fact in un-Natural History by boldly picking a monster's teeth.

No wonder Camberwell and its genteel neighbour, Denmark Hill, where his father lived, seemed remote from such scenes and solitudes. But lack of funds and eagerness to find a publisher for his book obliged Harry to set his face homewards. He raced westwards in the strong current of the Congo by steamer and by canoe, mile upon mile where the great river widens into lake-like stretches as broad as an arm of the sea, and studded with countless islands, some of them little floating worlds of matted growing vegetation, drifting with the current. He had plenty of opportunity for observing crocodiles all this time. One of them attacked the canoe in which a friend of his was reclining, and, being prevented from dragging him bodily out of water, disappeared with his foot.

When Harry, having reached his port of embarcation, Loanda Bay, presented himself on the doorstep of his old friend the British Consul there, he was at first mistaken for a beggar, so tattered had his clothes become. He certainly did not look as though he had just declined a well paid billet in the Congo service, in the hope of getting a Consular post under the British Government, which alone he wished to serve. He had lost his last chance of beginning life in the ordinary way by going to a University, but he had graduated in

a greater school and was not long in receiving public recognition. He bore letters from Stanley to King Leopold, and made the acquaintance of the royal Rhodes of Belgium before landing in England. The King of the Belgians received him most cordially at Laeken Palace, complimented him on his perfect French and on his travels, and offered him a good post on the Congo, as Stanley had done. But Harry unwittingly behaved like 'Lewis' – the perverse hero of 'The Constant Nymph,' accused by his practical sister of having prejudiced his career at the start by being sick over his rich godfather. The fever which had spared him in Africa was, as often happened in after years, brought out by the sudden chill of the North, and, as a symptom, he was suddenly and violently sick during his *tête-à-tête* with Leopold II. The King became quite paternal, and brought Harry to the nearest window. Whatever the faults and foibles of royalty in general may have been in those undemocratic days, and of King Leopold in particular, he made his wretched guest feel many degrees more at home, instead of wishing for a speedy death and burial. Next day, when my brother was better, he showed all his sketches to the King in Brussels and was entertained by him to a dinner. He left for England with a commission to recruit British employés for the Congo State. The notion, half implied, but never entirely believed by my brother, was that King Leopold would ultimately prove to be so remarkably disinterested as to further Stanley's projects for a British control of the Congo in the sense in which we at present control the Nile.

CHAPTER IV

It so happened that when my brother reached London in 1883 the fate of the Congo was being virtually decided there, and after he had read a paper before the Royal Geographical Society he was introduced to the Foreign Office by the President of that Society, Lord Aberdare. Sir Charles Dilke considered that my brother's knowledge of the country, of the Portuguese, of French and German ambitions and of the true intentions of King Leopold would be of assistance to our Government in framing and furthering two projected treaties of the utmost importance.

There was then no question of Belgium taking any direct interest in the Congo, and everyone was puzzled as to why King Leopold was spending vast sums of money on it. Stanley in earlier years had been considered anti-British; but he had just sent letters to our Foreign Office by Harry which seemed to dissipate that idea. In any case he had greatly checked French ambition, which nevertheless had secured the north bank of the Congo and claimed the right of pre-emption over the rest of it. French policy had then entered on an acutely anti-British phase, partly caused by our recent occupation of Egypt. On the other hand, Prince Bismarck, formerly opposed to the policy of German overseas possessions, had just embarked on an ambitious colonial policy, which Gladstone's weak Government was meeting in the worst possible way. A few years earlier, British officials had planted our

flag over all the western coasts of South Africa and the Congo, far to the north of it. The British Government had shillyshallied, and finally disowned their action. Before concluding treaties in South-West Africa the Germans actually asked our Government again if it had repudiated its claim to that country. Again evasions, shillyshallying, and a weakly peevish dog-in-the-manger answer that it was not British, but that things had better remain as they were. Prince Bismarck conceived a contempt for the British Ministers, and without any more 'by your leave' proceeded to claim districts over which we had established no effective control. The British reception of this *fait accompli* was distinctly peevish, and coupled with the untruthful suggestion that we had been taken by surprise, to which the British Press added jocosely satirical remarks on the Germans as colonists. Bismarck's push on the Congo therefore took on an anti-British complexion.

The time was passed when Britain had the quasi-monoply of the seas and shipping, and therefore the practical control of nearly all the African coastlands, which after the Napoleonic wars and during the suppression of the maritime Slave Trade we had taken as a matter of course. Already the cry was heard for new markets and the need for more of the vegetable fats and oils in which tropical Africa is so superlatively rich, and for cotton fields not under the control of the United States. The 'latest explorer', as Harry was quickly dubbed by the Press, was therefore eagerly questioned by both merchants and magnates in Press and Parliament, as well as by philanthropists who saw that it was not enough for us to suppress the maritime

Slave Trade while in the interior of the African continent it went on unchecked. Things simply could not remain as they were any longer, morally, economically, or politically, and all the world knew it except an obstinate knot of doctrinaire Liberals who were earning for themselves the nickname of Little Englanders.

But the Liberal Party was now producing its first great Imperialist since Whig days, in the person of Sir Charles Dilke, and he did not consider his Party's watchwords of 'Peace and Retrenchment' were inconsistent with our extended control, direct and indirect of an Africa newly revealed in the main by British explorers.

It was his influence which was furthering pourparlers and drafting treaties with Portugal which would have been of inestimable value to us both politically and commercially. They envisaged the countering of Boer and German ambitions, which kept South Africa divided and landlocked, by our purchase from Portugal of Delagoa Bay. We were to acknowledge Portuguese claims to Dahomey, and thus prevent the French from driving a wedge between our West African possessions. Most important of all was a scheme for a kind of Portuguese condominion which would have given us the virtual control of all the southern Congo basin. Another clause of the Treaty would have kept the Portuguese out of Nyasaland, where their assertion of old claims in the next decade brought Harry himself to the forefront as their temporary antagonist. My brother's general policy, as unfolded to the Foreign Office in 1883 and sub-

sequently, was to work with the Portuguese in their rôle of 'England's oldest Ally'. He had just visited their fertile and lovely islands in the Gulf of Guinea, and had been impressed by their high state of culture and the general wellbeing of their inhabitants.

It can easily be imagined therefore how disgusted and disappointed my brother was when Sir Charles Dilke's admirably conceived Treaty and its corollary arrangements were wrecked by a 'cave' of ignorant, bigoted Little Englanders led by Jacob Bright. The motive for this folly was that obscure person's horror at the idea of our alliance with a Catholic country. As a matter of fact, under this Treaty, Portugal would have held the same relations to us on the Congo, only in a much more friendly spirit, as the Egyptian Government on the Nile. Bright's bigotry in spiting a weak but friendly Catholic power simply cut off our own nose in Africa. France and Germany for the moment forgot their own antagonisms. Faced with a *fait accompli,* they would have had to agree to the Anglo-Portuguese arrangement, but when that was wrecked they resolved that they would step into the breach. So together they drove a double wedge of territory between our Gold Coast and Niger possessions and resolved to keep us out of the Congo, and everywhere hasten to extend their own Protectorates at our expense. If we had quietly pushed this Treaty through, without informing and alarming Europe till it was all settled, our position in Africa would have been enormously consolidated and strengthened. The person who benefited most by this wrangle was King Leopold, who made use of the

rivalry of the Great Powers on the Congo to stabilize and extend his own sovereignty over it, uncontrolled by any check on the part of Belgium in the ensuing misrule of his vast African concessions.

But there was still a chance of realizing ambitions which Harry was perhaps the first to conceive as a whole and was certainly the first to crystallize in a telling phrase. Just as Sir Charles Dilke was the first to talk of 'Greater Britain', so my brother was the coiner of the phrase 'from the Cape to Cairo', though he wished to extend the slogan by adding 'from Cairo to Old Calabar'. He advocated at this time in the Press the linking up of all our scattered West African possessions with each other and with the as yet unconquered Egyptian Sudan in order to secure the greatest continuous cotton-growing area in the world. In illustration of this, at a lecture to Lancashire merchants, he painted a great T of the length and breadth of Africa British red. At long last the length of that T is ours, but its top stroke was broken by the French push through Wadai to the upper Ubangi branch of the Congo.

In regard to East Africa, however, Sir John Kirk at Zanzibar and Sir Charles Dilke at home vainly strove to inspire Mr. Gladstone to take some slight interest in Great Britain's participation in the future Protectorate.* Sir John Kirk reported that French and German 'scientific' expeditions were becoming

* But he 'broke out' to Dilke against what he called 'the annexations in the mountain country behind Zanzibar with an unrememberable name', adding ominously 'I have asked Granville whether it may not stand over for a while'. See *Life of Sir Charles Dilke*, by Gwynn & Tuckwell (John Murray).

alarmingly active in that vast region between Somaliland and Nyasaland. He advocated that a British scientist-explorer with political power and capabilities should be sent to Mount Kilimanjaro, the loftiest and first known outpost of that great patch of East African 'White man's country' beyond the coast possessions of the Sultanate of Zanzibar.

Accordingly, when the Royal Society and the British Association combined with the Royal Geographical Society to provide funds and equipment for a Natural History and Botanical expedition to Kilimanjaro, and chose my brother to lead it, the Foreign Office put him under the wing of Sir John Kirk. That meant conditional permission to make treaties with chiefs in certain strategic positions. Very unwisely, no monetary contribution was made by our Government towards the rather meagre £1,000 subscribed by the learned Societies to my brother's expedition for exclusively scientific purposes. The more enlightened of our statesmen were beginning to see the value of inner Africa, but lacked the courage to provoke the penny-wise, pound-foolish Little Englanders in the House of Commons. The value of West Africa was better known than East, because its river-borne trade seemed likely to pay all the expense of administration. No one yet realized that in Equatorial East Africa there were highlands comparable in extent to the plateaux of the Andes, with climate and resources suitable to European settlement. So the British Government in 1883 and for long afterwards copied the parsimony of Queen Elizabeth and James I, who would encourage hardy adventurers to search for an

El Dorado 'at their owen charge' (to quote Queen Elizabeth's canny proviso). In this case, as on the Congo, my brother had to prolong the work of his expedition with money he earned by his sketches in the *Graphic* and the backing which his father was always willing to give him.

This was the first of many occasions on which my brother and his work suffered from Government meanness. Yet he was actually grateful for the countenance they gave him, and surprised too, for he had been a warm critic of Gladstone's indifference to insuring for us open markets. With rather pathetic gratitude, he acknowledged later to Sir Percy Anderson 'Gladstone gave me my first chance'.

My brother was still only twenty-five when in March, 1884, he sailed for East Africa as the agent of three learned Societies and – unofficially – of the British Government. The *Pall Mall Gazette* remarked at the time, 'Since Gordon left England we have met few more remarkable individualities than Mr. Johnston, but no contrast could be greater than that presented by these two men: Gordon regarding himself as a passive instrument in the hands of the Almighty, Johnston, cool, full of intelligence, but not without a certain enthusiasm. The one is to the other what Cromwell is to Darwin.' At a more tragic time in the future the names of these two wardens of white fame in Africa were to be publicly bracketed together.

Under Foreign Office instruction, Harry broke his journey in Egypt in order to hand Government despatches to Lord Cromer (then Sir Evelyn Baring). As my brother had learnt Arabic in Tunis, it was thought

he might be of service to the Anglo-Egyptian Administration, but the future Lord Cromer was by no means as amiable to him as he became in after years when his shy caller had himself become an African Governor. The times were trying to Sir Evelyn's equanimity. Lord Wolseley's army was proceeding, all too slowly, to Gordon's relief, and much of Egypt was in a very disturbed state. Before catching his steamer to Zanzibar, and while waiting for a while to see if his services were required in Egypt, my brother made an adventurous dash with his friend, Mr. Ernest Floyer, in order to see as much of the back country, perhaps I should say the Front, as possible. They went in a special train, and actually got ahead of the British Army. So at Assiut they found the city not yet occupied by British forces. When their train came to a standstill there it was surrounded by an angry mob, who began throwing missiles and wounded Mr. Floyer. Just as the wilder spirits were bringing up faggots to set fire to their saloon carriage, there was a sound of galloping, and a hundred British Hussars dispersed the mob. That day the British occupation of Assiut was begun, and on the morrow some of their assailants came to sell my brother oranges!

Before leaving Egypt, Harry was presented to the Khedive Taufik, and allowed to penetrate the abandoned harem garden of his deposed father, Ismael, whom, as it happened, Harry had been asked to help entertain in London a few months previously.

At Aden my brother recruited a most devoted personal servant named Virapan, an Indian pupil of Catholic missionaries. On at least one occasion he

owed his life to this intrepid and resourceful follower, and kept him with him in different parts of Africa till their association ended in a tragedy.

The Muhammadan porters of Zanzibar whom my brother next recruited on that island were, and are as a race, generally satisfactory, but those whom he picked up later at Mombasa had, in common with other Mombasa natives at that time, a distinctly bad character. Particularly unreliable and treacherous were two Natural History collectors whom he engaged to help him get and prepare specimens of the fauna and flora.

These coast-lands were then part of the independent Sultanate of Zanzibar, not yet British, but nevertheless dominated by the strong personality of Sir John Kirk. My brother's stay with Sir John at Zanzibar was fraught with some important consequences. As with Stanley, so with Kirk, an instant and lasting friendship was formed. Sir John Kirk was striving hard to save the best parts of East Africa for Britain. As he was not allowed by the backboneless Lord Granville to hoist our flag over an inch of territory for fear of offending France or Germany or the smaller fry of the Liberal Party, he did the next best thing by 'covering' a great strip of the East African coast with the red flag of the Sultan of Zanzibar, over whom he exercised a strong moral suasion. Their greatest tussle had come over Sir John's demand that the Sultan should sign a treaty for the suppression of the East African slave trade, for which his island had till then been the *entrepôt*. To intimidate the Sultan, with whom he was on terms of personal friendship, Sir

John Kirk described to him the possible horrors and inconveniences of an impending British blockade, and asked him what he would do when his city was starving. 'Why,' answered the Sultan blandly, 'I should come and live with you, Consul.'

Sir John Kirk's native name (Baloza) was known and respected far inland, and Harry was the bearer of letters of introduction from him written in Swahili, and also of some secret political instructions, capable of very wide interpretation, according to circumstances.

I find a letter from Sir John Kirk to my brother, dated three years later, saying:

> 'Your letter is the nicest I have received since I left the Service. It was sad to see the work of my life transferred for political reasons to other hands. Germany has had us well in hand, whichever party has been in power. Lord Salisbury sees no loss in giving up our interests in East Africa because they are Indian and therefore cannot make themselves felt in Parliament. I do wish you could have taken my place. Between us, we might have quietly kept British interests safe even after all that has happened.'

From a veteran explorer and administrator to a young man of twenty-seven, that was a most generous tribute and testimonial.

Lord Salisbury, though a far stronger man than his predecessors, nevertheless allowed his African policy to be jeopardized, and sometimes partly spoilt, to suit the wishes of Royal or Parliamentary personages whose knowledge of Africa was of the slightest. His general

attitude to his men on the spot was, 'Use your own discretion, but for goodness sake don't ask for more money, and don't let the matter get into Parliament.'

Harry used to tell a story of a Consul on the East Coast who shall be nameless. It was part of his duty to conduct a Civil form of marriage whenever any British subjects, missionaries included, wanted to be legally joined in matrimony. (A religious rite had no legal status.) Accordingly, many earnest missionaries came in couples to the Consul to have their bliss confirmed. His improvised form of marriage was civil enough in spirit, but did not follow the prescribed form and letter. He said, 'Bless you, my children,' or words to that effect, drank their health, and wished them happiness. But after a great many honeymoons had taken place, it was revealed to these horrified people that they were not married in the eyes of the law. The Consul's signature and those of witnesses, and other essentials of the written record were missing, so that children born of these benignly blessed unions were without the rights of legitimacy. There was an enormous public scandal and outcry. Lord Salisbury had to authorize, at some expense, a special Act of Parliament to legitimize the missionaries' offspring, and at first was so incensed that he contemplated dismissing the absent-minded Consul from the Service. Relenting later, he sent him to an obscure port on the Adriatic, where honeymoon couples might indeed resort, but only after they had been safely married in England.

Missionaries were in those days the only Good Samaritans available if travellers fell sick on the East Coast,

and Harry's start for the interior was delayed in a mission hospital, for the good luck he had enjoyed as regards malaria on the Congo deserted him now. Sooner than delay his journey to Kilimanjaro, he had himself carried in a hammock out of Mombasa.

Conditions for the *safari* or caravan in the very imperfectly known and quite unsettled East Africa of those days were unsafe, uncertain and uncomfortable. When I covered a stretch of Harry's old route with him fifteen years later, a great change for the better had taken place as regards safety, but the discomforts away from the incomplete Uganda Railway were pretty much the same. The way was a two-foot wide path meandering through thorny thickets or glaring stretches where the bush had been burnt. The means was an army of porters marching single-file, like a great snake wriggling its way across the country. If, as is usually the case, they were in a good temper, they sang an improvised Swahili chorus as they went – some critical description of their master, if he were out of earshot or ignorant of the language, or a reiterated yearning for their most common objects of desire. These Swahilis (nearly all ex-slaves in those days) had quickly discovered the most cunning use of the industrial strike, or its less honest relation, ca' canny. When a caravan had got a day's march beyond the coast, one realized unpleasantly how many of its members were habitual drunkards, thieves, shirkers and malingerers, who thought the time opportune to test the white man's mettle, try for a 'rise', and see how far they could go in other ways than mileage. Progress and safety would then depend on the isolated white man's

determination, backed by the only means of justice – the whip. It was the more necessary to dominate these naughty grown-up children because a good many of them carried one's bank balance on their heads, in the shape of sacks of glass beads – the native currency at that time – of all sorts of carefully selected colours, to suit the local tastes and changing fashions of inner Africa, where ornament took the place of clothing and money.

When on his first day's march to Kilimanjaro, Harry came up with his porters he found that they had come to a stop. They lolled about, looking at him in his invalid hammock in stolid unconcern. Several yawned unrestrainedly in his face when he questioned them as to the cause of this prolonged halt. He staggered to his feet and called on the laggards to take up their burdens while the morning was still fresh, and not to halt again without his permission. He was only met with sullen looks and murmurs of dissent. Even the respectable Zanzibaris stood waiting to see how the *Bwana* would meet his first difficulties.

Perhaps they thought he was only a sick and inexperienced boy as he stood, weak and giddy with fever, but with two angry red spots now on his sunken, sallow cheeks. He singled out the worst of the men and told him peremptorily to pick up his load. He promptly and curtly refused, and was as promptly seized by Virapan, Harry's Indian Mission servant, who held him while the irate young master picked up the man's own walking cane and belaboured him with it. This proved a sufficient show of force. The porters quickly hoisted their loads on their bullet heads

and trotted off single-file. Even the scapegoat soon emerged from sulky silence and gave a half-humorous, half-dolorous account of his beating to the others.

After that my brother thought it better for discipline that he should walk with the men instead of being carried, but when he got into camp he fainted, and had to be revived by Virapan with a cup of champagne, whose praises as a restorative he always sang, while decrying alcohol in Africa as a daily beverage. Near this very spot in after years he told me of an incident which has a moral:

A certain publicity-seeker from home thought he would do a little of the 'exploring stunt', after there was nothing left to discover except mares' nests. He called at a Mission of the White Fathers, who in this place had lost five Superiors in succession, victims to hard work and hardships in a deadly climate. They lived very simply on the native foods, except for such vegetables and fruits as they had introduced and cultivated themselves. Wine was carefully kept for cases of sickness or for hospitality to any European passing by – an infrequent occurrence. On the arrival of the bumptious 'explorer', the Guest Master held an anxious consultation with the new Superior. There was but one bottle of champagne left. It might mean life to a dying man; but still, hospitality was a sacred duty, and all Europeans and Christians were brothers out here. Better open it for their guest without stint or hint of its preciousness. The exploring journalist did himself well at their expense, and departed for the coast and comfortable Europe which his hosts would probably never see again. Of course the inevitable

book came out, with its no less inevitable gibe at Missionaries – 'These priests live like fighting cocks – champagne *every* day!'

But soon it was not wine that was necessary for life, but water, as Harry's Kilimanjaro expedition wound its way painfully through the thorny acacia scrub and dusty red desert between the coast and the better watered highlands of East Equatorial Africa. There was an exceptionally bad drought and famine that year. Living skeletons of men were limping after lions in hope of being allowed to play the part of hyaenas after the king of beasts had killed and eaten a zebra or antelope.

On the longest march between watering places, the porters not only consumed their own supply in an improvident manner but drank up their master's as well. Hobbling painfully, resting continually, and imagining cooling drafts, he persisted doggedly in his determination not to give in. When at last, with blistered feet and parched and swollen tongue, he stumbled up a rocky path in the fast fading daylight and toiled over the last weary miles under a rising moon, he saw a small fire burning, and by it his faithful Indian servant who had gone ahead to fetch water. He had fainted. The only other man in sight said the water was up a mountain, five thousand feet above them! There was nothing to do after a thirty-two mile march in the sweltering heat but to lie and wait till water was brought to them in gourds, deliciously clear and cool. But it was a long time before all the porters were collected and able to march again.

It was a relief indeed when after similar marches

they gradually emerged from the waterless wild, obtained a view of the twin peaks of Kilimanjaro, floating like an island in the morning mist, and reached its well watered, fertile foot-hills at Taveita. Here was rich forest and abundance of food and water, and friendly natives, offering a city of refuge to travellers crossing the perilous country of the Masai.

Mandara of Moshi was the Kilimanjaro king to whom Sir John Kirk had commended the expedition and its leader. But by the time Kilimanjaro was reached this savage monarch's authority and power had shrunk to the dominion of less than half the mountain mass, and not the higher half, the fauna and flora of which Harry had been commissioned to study. Worse still, Mandara's enemies were leagued against him in bitter enmity in reprisal for his alliance with the ferocious Masai and certain Swahili slave-traders at his court, who supplied him with guns and gunpowder so that he might capture slaves for them. These Swahilis were bitterly averse to the advent of an arch-enemy of their cruel commerce, who would be sure to report their doings to the mighty *manowari* on the coast.

They accordingly from the first did their utmost to make mischief between him and his savage host, by covert insolence to the Englishman, and by fawning flattery and cunningly compounded lies to Mandara, on whose fears, vanity and cupidity they continually played. In those days these Swahili traders were the only means of communication between the multitudinous little African kings and courts, and they had spread and exaggerated the fame of their patron,

Library
Arizona State Museum

Mandara, far and wide, even to the independent and powerful kingdom of Uganda, where Mutesa reigned.

Mandara had hitherto entertained only two Europeans, and had plundered them of nearly all they possessed, without actually using force directly. He advanced with the greatest geniality to meet the latest fly fallen into his web, saying 'Child of the Baloza (Sir John Kirk), I like your face.'

Harry could not truthfully return the compliment, for Mandara was a one-eyed king, with the face of a fleshy old woman, and he squirted banana beer through his teeth.

'So the Baloza has sent you to see me? Well, I don't want you ever to go. Do you hear? Never. What nice boots you are wearing. Have you any my size?' (Harry had fortunately very small feet.) 'Show me the presents you have brought.'

When Mandara had slapped his thigh appreciatively over these, he allowed his tired guest to retire to his tent. But scarcely was Harry dressed next day when Mandara returned his call, casting his dangerous gaze around the tent and furniture. He noted many things, but only actually carried off an old tooth-brush. He allowed Harry, however, to purchase a bit of the mountain – the first British-owned land in inner East Africa. But to procure this concession he had to doctor Mandara's harem. The head wife led off with a bad leg, and the rest disclosed a string of maladies, real or imaginary, for which paraffin proved to be a cheap and efficient remedy, mixed with unbounded belief in the white man's magic.

Mandara had uttered a caution, capable of being

interpreted in two ways, that it was not safe to wander outside his dominions. But neither was it to remain long inside them. My brother feared that through Mandara's rapacity he would soon be so impoverished as to be unable to pay his way back to the coast, so that he would have to be ransomed. Thinking that what the eye does not see the heart does not desire, he concealed from the greedy king the more precious of his possessions, such as his elephant gun; and for further safety boldly told Mandara that he had decided to camp higher up the mountain, the better to collect Natural History specimens not found in the hot lands below. Mandara merely replied enigmatically: 'We shall see – to-morrow.'

When on the morrow Harry gave orders to shoulder loads and march, only the Zanzibaris responded. The rest sat sullen and immovable. He asked them if they had understood. 'Perfectly,' they said, 'but Mandara has given orders not to move.'

'But *I* am your master. *I* pay you, and I command you to take up your loads.'

'What do we care for your commands? Mandara could kill us all in a moment. And you – why, you daren't even beat us.'

Unfortunately, all the mutineers had received the greater part of their wages in advance for the contract which they now refused to fulfil. But Mandara had tried in vain to cajole and frighten the true-hearted Zanzibaris, and with these my brother started, leaving perforce half his goods behind.

The new base chosen was higher, and a great stretch of East Africa was spread before it like a map,

with beautiful hanging woods in the foreground and the snow peaks occasionally visible behind through the clouds. Mandara, whose soldiers had accompanied the little party to make sure it did not get beyond his grasp, now agreed to sell this flowery mountain terrace, and part of the price was a quantity of gunpowder. Harry did not realize at the time that this would be used for slave raids on the neighbouring mountain villages and its source exultantly proclaimed, so that the league of states around would now look on Mandara's much vaunted white friend as a new enemy of theirs, and thus he would be more than ever a prisoner. Till this state of affairs dawned upon him, he made himself perfectly happy building a little farm settlement, sowing European vegetables in a Mediterranean climate, and harnessing the abundant mountain rills for irrigation. Soon he was proudly eating a salad of his own growing. It was always his aim in Africa to dispense with European tinned foods as much as possible, however alluring their labels might be.

But Mandara's parasites, the Swahilis, had only counselled the mouse being released a little till he could conveniently be pounced upon again. They soon began to pay him constant visits, coolly demanding this and that article in the name of Mandara. After several refusals, their leader said in a threatening tone: 'I tell you what, young man, if you are not more generous you will never be able to stop here.' My brother's reply to this insolence was to seize his stick and 'go for' him. But the emissary gathered up his skirts and fled, followed by his companions.

Harry pursued them in a leisurely manner to

Mandara's house, where he overtook them lolling about, studiously indifferent to his approach. He called on the nearest of them and told him to tell Mandara that the white man desired an interview. The man turned his back, shrugged his shoulders and smiled scornfully at his comrades. Knowing that these curs only cringed to force, Harry raised his stick and brought it down with a sounding whack on the inattentive man, commanding tersely:

'Now, you pig, you slave, go and tell the Chief I have come to say good-bye.'

At that moment Mandara himself came to meet him, in a quite unexpectedly winning manner. Not to be thus put off, my brother at once complained of his courtiers' attempted exactions, and threatened to leave for the coast and tell the British why. Before this bold front Mandara hedged and prevaricated, pretending he had known nothing of what was going on.

'You know,' Harry continued less warmly as he and Mandara sipped Banana beer, 'I am a poor man. The Wise Men of Europe have not provided me with many goods. If you really want me to build in your country you must leave off asking for presents,' and he proceeded to tell the king the parable of the goose that laid the golden eggs. 'Wasn't that a foolish man, Mandara?' he asked when he had delicately pointed the moral.

'Ye-es,' replied the chief thoughtfully, sipping more beer, and added: 'Now I will tell *you* a tale. When I plant a sapling I let it grow quietly at first. I do not pluck its early blossoms or its tender leaves. I wait

until it is mature, and then,' he added with slow emphasis, looking before him, 'I cut it down'.

Harry could only counter this by a description of the white man's superior powers of destruction.

Mandara thereupon proclaimed himself his father, and announced a complete community of goods between them. Affecting to scowl at the courtiers, he added: 'Let the Baloza's child settle here in peace and not concern himself with the conversation of slaves.' The Swahili courtiers bore this allusion to themselves quite stolidly, as a pre-arranged comedy, but resolved that the next round be theirs.

After these palavers, the text of which, as regards conversation, I owe for the most part to his own verbatim account in *The Kilimanjaro Expedition* (published by Kegan Paul), my brother was freer for a time to explore the beauties of this African Switzerland and prepare for his ascent to the snow peaks which the Masai reverently called 'The Home of God'. But very soon Harry found that his messengers were prevented from going to and from the coast by enemies of Mandara who proclaimed themselves the white man's foes as well. Soon this hostile league began to carry the war into their enemy's country, with fire and slaughter and savage vows of worse. Mandara's routed warriors came flying to their citadel (a stockade of living saplings which had grown together into a fireproof wall), shouting to Harry: 'Oh, Master, run for your life!' The smoke of burning villages darkened the day.

Mandara had largely brought this vengeance upon himself, but should he be crushed the white man

within his gates could expect scant mercy from victorious savages. Mandara now sent to him, imploring advice and ammunition. My brother found him sitting tremulous with fear among his wives and children, and told him he had with him a magic box which, once opened, would rout his enemies.

After a little deliberation, Harry took with him from the sylvan citadel the remainder of Mandara's soldiers, when they had quenched their thirst with banana beer, brewed by the women. The approach to the battlefield was across a series of almost inaccessible ravines. The fight had rolled across the hills. Stopping to breathe, Harry, destined to become inured to years of African warfare, looked for the first time on the bodies of men slain in battle. The weapons which had effected the greatest slaughter (despite Mandara's boasted guns) were the great shovel-bladed spears, with herring-bone spikes up the shaft, a twist of which will disembowel a man. Many heads were severed by short broad-swords, and the place looked and smelt like a shambles. Lovely butterflies of many colours sucked up the thickening gore with the enjoyment of ghouls. The neighbouring trees were crowded with vultures and crows.

Saddened and disgusted, Harry loathed friends and foes alike, and determined to end this bloody business at all risks. When he arrived on the field of action there was a pause. The contending ranks faced each other, breathless and glaring. But Mandara's weary men were beginning to waver, and seemed to think of going home and leaving the white man to settle the conflict. Had their foes charged then, there would

have been an end to a promising career. But all were curious to see what tactics the white man would follow. Besides, the sun was just set, and the Negro does not relish fighting in the dark. Friend and foe alike could just distinguish in the darkening twilight the white man moving about with a bullseye lantern and placing mysterious coloured tubes on upright rods abstracted from a large tin box.

No sooner had darkness set in than there blazed upon the opposing host with a shriek and a deafening series of explosions a shower of multiplying stars of ghastly and lurid colours. The white magician was doubtless bringing the very heavens on their heads: the stars were fighting for him. Away they broke and scattered, helter-skelter, stumbling in the darkness, and throwing away their weapons in their haste to escape the falling fire and the baleful glare of the rolling eyes of monsters evoked by the sorcerer, whose art had consisted in fixing rockets and Catherine wheels to stakes and tree trunks. The allies were scarcely less awestruck than the enemy.

Assured of safety, Mandara became prodigiously brave. He laughed like a stage villain, brandished his spear, and glared ferociously. He then clasped both the hands of the wonder-worker and coolly proposed that he should follow up his advantage by an invasion of the enemy's territory, which the men of Moshi under such a covering fire could completely devastate.

Harry replied that he had not come to Kilimanjaro to make war on anyone and had only resorted to a threat of force to protect his own men and goods. He added coldly that the British strongly disapproved of

Mandara's slave wars, which were doubtless at the bottom of the recent trouble. He expatiated warmly on the brutality of the slave trade and the silliness of a war which in the end only benefited the Arabs, 'and you, you vile wretches,' he shouted in fury at the Swahili parasites who sat sulkily by, 'may God punish you in this world and the next. I at any rate will do my best to thwart your dealings, and will give your names to the Consul at Zanzibar.' He wound up by advising Mandara to make peace with his enemies and concentrate on legitimate trade.

Mandara was for the nonce a convert, but Harry, having been sent and paid for scientific work, could not for ever be the keeper of his conscience; so the Swahili toadies soon recovered their ascendancy over his greedy and vacillating mind. It would have been a good investment for the Anti-Slavery Society, the Foreign Office, and the benevolent public to have kept my brother on the spot in a Consular capacity.

One day, as he was working tranquilly, this message was delivered to him: 'Mandara knows your heart is black and deceitful. You have concealed from him many guns so that you might take the country by surprise and make yourself chief. Now therefore give up all your guns, and the big one for elephants, and all your powder and bullets. If not, he will know that you are his enemy!' Mandara also demanded a hundred rupees a month for the bit of land which my brother had bought outright and cultivated. To all these demands Harry returned a curt negative.

Mandara's next move was to send soldiers to prevent him collecting wild flowers and birds, saying

that everything on the mountain was royal property. He also declined to see him. But the old rascal had a sense of humour; for he ironically sent my brother a basket full of vegetable refuse with a message that he might add it to his collections! Harry kicked the basket from one end of his settlement to the other, and said that was his only answer.

There followed an enforced boycott of the white man. No one was allowed to sell him food or milk. Then, finding that he was growing enough food to defeat this blockade, Mandara tried another tack. He said he was going to war again, and demanded a contribution of men and guns. My brother's answer was that his men had other work to do and that Mandara's quarrels were his own business. Thereupon Mandara sent an armed warrior who posted himself outside Harry's house and made expressive signs of cutting his throat.

But an unintentional ally saved that consummation. Mandara suffered another defeat at the hands of his enemies and so was obliged to withdraw the men who were beseiging Harry's settlement in order to enforce the boycott. Mandara's people were friendly to Harry, and the old man himself had gone on sending to him for medicine all through their quarrels. My brother, in fact, became not only the king's physician but the tribal doctor as well, and the people declared he had brought them wealth as well as health. One of Mandara's Swahilis suggested that the white man's medicines might be poisons, but the old man said quietly, 'A black man might do so, but a white man never would.' Finally Mandara, who heard that his

CRINUM JOHNSTONI

enemies had stopped short of his frontier out of wholesome respect for the Star Shooter, paid him a visit of reconciliation. 'But do not show me your elephant gun,' he said, 'lest I should desire it.'

Taking advantage of the peace, and leaving behind most of his possessions as a pledge of his return, Harry set out on a visit to the beautifully forested Taveita highlands. Here he opened up very friendly relations with the people (governed not by a king, but by an enlightened oligarchy), and was allowed to purchase some land, which subsequently became the basis for our negotiations with Germany respecting East African spheres of influence. Harry's camping places in this district were beset with lions and leopards, and he killed one of the latter at dangerously close quarters. Here, as nearly everywhere in Africa, the leopard is more feared than the lion.

On Harry's return to Moshi, his milkman was so delighted to see him back again that he spat vigorously, spitting amongst these people being a sign of respect and thanksgiving.

Mandara was now converted to the idea, which he had so long opposed, of my brother going up to the snows, so no further time was lost in setting out for this long desired journey. From six thousand feet and upwards he wrote ecstatically of pink begonias, magenta-coloured balsams gleaming among the fern fronds and clumps of crimson gladioli. Soon giant heaths appeared (such as he afterwards found on Mount Ruwenzori), and a new banana-like plant with large fronds, black trunk and yellow flowers which was scientifically named at home *Senecio johnstoni*. At

nine thousand feet, in a forest hung with grey beards of dripping lichen, Mandara's enemies swooped upon the white man's little party, bellowing their war cry. But they stopped short, awestruck, when they caught sight of Harry's theodolite, which they thought must mean powerful magic, and then withdrew to the top of a neighbouring hillock.

Returning to his base at Mandara's, my brother found to his joy that a reinforcement of reliable coast porters whom he had sent his head man to collect had arrived, and these, discreetly collecting the whole of his portable goods, and well armed, joined their master.

My brother found Mandara in a very morose mood. He turned away his head, and his Swahili courtiers imitated him with exaggeration. But my brother proceeded to interpret very freely a letter from Sir John Kirk giving him stringent orders to return. Mandara was nearly as obdurate as Pharaoh, and was shrewd enough to see why his white 'guest' had left some of his goods at Taveita so that he might return with empty-handed porters for the rest. However, the new contingent had brought him some really handsome presents, and at the sight of them his set features relaxed into a regretful smile. He exacted what I fear was an insincere promise of the white man's return – 'And you won't forget to bring me an iron bedstead, a chair like yours, and a European dog, will you?'

The first thing Harry did when he got beyond Mandara's territory was to release some slaves whom he overtook on their *via dolorosa* to the coast in the

custody of the two ex-Natural History collectors of his who had mutinied and deserted to Mandara for the more lucrative slave trade. (It was they who had acted as spies and told Mandara of the existence of the guns which my brother had thought it wiser not to show him. They had thus excited both his fears and his cupidity.) The poor slaves had their heads inserted in a wooden pillory and were bound to trees. Their masters started up from sleep in the shade just as the slaves' bonds were being cut, and snatched their guns. Then, seeing themselves outmatched, they broke into furious abuse, in turn subdued to fawning and lies at the threat of the retribution which they deserved. The miscreants fled to Mandara's, threatening to return with an army, while their late captives crawled to the white man's feet, calling him 'Elephant', and 'Father' whilst they spat on him continually to manifest their esteem.

The next country to be entered, on the mountain side, was that of Marañu, into which Harry made his official entrance by wriggling through a tunnel three feet wide and high. But the people waiting for him on the other side did not club his head as it emerged, because they had heard of his disagreements with Mandara and no longer considered him their enemy.

Here he was received by the Sultan's mother, who took him by both hands and looked hard into his eyes to assure herself of his moral uprightness. Prudence and etiquette alike obliged him to glare at her so fixedly in return that she was forced to lower her eyes first and inform her attendants that she thoroughly approved of her unflinching guest. But her scrutiny

was to go much further. She expressed a great desire to see the colour of his legs. His head man, Ali Kiongwe, urged that this was quite as necessary as the staring out process, so a sufficient gap had to be made between riding breeches and boots to expose the upper parts of his shins. The Sultan's mother and all her ladies in waiting uttered cries of admiration at the sight of flesh so white, debating among themselves whether it was so because he kept it covered. They declared that on their part they showed everything to the sun, a superfluous piece of information, since Harry could not fail to remark that their Court dress was limited to bead collars and iron bracelets.

I venture to summarize this episode and some preceding ones from letters my brother contributed at the time to the *Daily Telegraph*. Rider Haggard wrote what looked like an exact paraphrase of it in Good's adventures in *King Solomon's Mines,* and was accused in the Press of plagiarism. He replied that he had never seen it in the *Daily Telegraph,* and pointed out that my brother's book, *The Kilimanjaro Expedition,* which was partly a reprint of his articles, was published a few months subsequent to *King Solomon's Mines*. Harry in no way resented this 'Good' story, and I feel it has been laid by sufficiently long to warrant its being distilled for a generation unfamiliar with it. On ours, in his family circle, it was so vividly impressed by his amusing way of recounting his early exploring experiences that I scarcely require to aid my memory in re-telling it as part of his life story and an earnest of the capability he was to display during many years in savage Africa.

With great difficulty my brother at last escaped the petty rulers' cupidity and curiosity and made his ascent to the Kilimanjaro snows, now no doubt to be visited both easily and prosaically. As his porters were afraid to venture above the clouds, he was unable to reach the summit, but got to nearly 17,000 feet. When he returned to his men, he found they had given him up for dead and had bolted down the mountain. On reaching them he used sufficiently vigorous language to prove that though faint with hunger he was not an anæmic ghost.

One of the quaintest observations which he made in the Natural History of this region was the splendid mountaineering qualities of elephants. He found them still agile at a height of 13,000 feet.

He foresaw what a fine site this great mountain mass would prove for European settlement. It was his treaties made hereabouts which induced our Foreign Office to put forward a British claim to Mount Kilimanjaro. But the ex-Kaiser wanted it for Germany.

Lord Salisbury was thought to be bowing to Queen Victoria's agreement with this wish when he deflected our frontier so as to leave the mountain in German hands till the Great War. Taveita, where Harry had also bought land and made treaties, however, was the foundation of our East African protectorate.

Harry returned to the coast with a fine botanic and Natural History collection. I give far less space here to his observations than to the dangers and difficulties he encountered in making them, and which may be taken as typical of those early days, still within the era of genuine African exploration. Anyone interested in

his scientific data can consult his own works, which I am mentioning in the order of their publication.

He might never have written any of them if he had not retained his ready wit in the last danger which threatened the existence of his expedition before it reached the safety of the coast. He had had to keep up a running fight to get away from Kilimanjaro, and when he at last got on to the plains a raiding band of the much dreaded Masai swooped upon the little party. But as soon as they were within earshot my brother got Ali Kiongwe to shout to them that his men were badly infected with smallpox, with the advice to the Masai to keep their distance. The disconcerted warriors, who greatly dreaded this disease, so deadly where it is of recent importation, halted, irresolutely leaning on their terrible spears, and demanded proof. Immediately an albino porter was pushed forward as an awful manifestation of the ravages of smallpox. 'Look!' exclaimed the horrified Masai, 'It has turned a black man white!' and they shouted the unnecessary injunction to the trembling but really quite healthy porters to keep right out of their way lest they might get their wind and catch the disease. Neither would they touch any of my brother's goods, for the same reason.

CHAPTER V

LONDON society in 1885 was inclined to make a lion of 'Kilimanjaro Johnston'. To his old artist world and the zoologists and geographers who regarded him as one of themselves were added friends of most diverse achievements and interests. Earl Grey (as he afterwards became) sought his co-operation in converting financiers and politicians to an imperialist and 'forward' African policy. The Press quoted him in favour of a British East Africa and a future Uganda Railway, on the merits and demerits of missionaries and the best means of combating the Slave Trade. While still only twenty-seven, his *bons mots* passed from mouth to mouth in a society which perhaps has never been surpassed for its selective hostesses, its brilliant talkers, men of letters and churchmen who were also, in the best sense, men of the world, and as good statesmen as the politicians of those very different times. If Society was more exclusive than now, it was, on the other hand, much smaller, and inclined to give a young man of parts a better innings than our more crowded world of to-day. The barely revealed Africa of those days held much the same lure to curiosity, cupidity, adventure and Imperialist or missionary zeal as America for the Conquistadores or their would-be rivals in Elizabethan England. Indeed, an analogy may be drawn between the Fifteen-eighties and the Eighteen-eighties, in that both those decades, three centuries apart, saw the birth of chartered com-

panies for the exploitation and government of the newest world. But there was this happy difference, that whereas our Drake and Hawkins started the ocean slave trade with the concurrence of their money-loving Queen, Victorian policy was to command the trade routes of Africa largely for the purpose of ending the legal status of slavery for ever.

My brother's knowledge of and interest in this question gained him the friendship of those curiously contrasted allies, Cardinal Manning and W. T. Stead. The Cardinal made much the same impression on Harry as he did on that Nonconformist Radical who made a pulpit of the Press. My brother had even less appreciation of institutional religion and its hierarchs than Stead, but I have heard them discuss the much debated character of the Cardinal with veneration and complete concurrence in his saintly-secular aims: Death to black slavery, white slavery, the economic slavery of our poor, and the political enslavement of any nation capable of ordered self-rule.

But not all the workers against Nineteenth Century forms of slavery were of equal grain. I have a note my brother made of one of his evenings at that period. Cardinal Manning called for him at his flat in St. Margaret's Mansions, Westminster, and carried him off in his sober brougham to the drawing-room of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, who had already bespoken his advocacy that night for the prosecution of the campaign against slavery in inner Africa. Harry was struck as they entered by the curious likeness between the Cardinal and their hostess, especially in their manner and bearing. Though she addressed him as 'Your

Eminence', she might have been mistaken for his sister. But most of the company did not impress my brother as likely to put brains, energy or earnestness into the campaign which he had at heart. He records:

> 'Our hostess said a few pleasant words to open the ball. A sonorous-voiced M.P. ejaculated platitudes whilst he flirted his coat tails up and down. Two enthusiasts ranted and got hot-faced amid the cool, contemptuous glances of the majority of their well-behaved, uninterested audience, and, as a matter of course, there was no practical decision arrived at.'

Neither was there when he tried to persuade the ultra-cautious Sir William Machinnon to back effectively the Imperial British East Africa Chartered Company, of which my brother's treaties and purchases at Taveita and on Kilimanjaro formed the nucleus.

Such lack of vision had always excited the contempt of a new and greatly valued friend of Harry at this time – Sir Richard Burton. An assiduous reader of his works and those of his scarcely less talented wife, my brother had always longed to meet this fascinating couple. He was introduced to them by Oswald Crawfurd, the great authority on Portugal, and found himself very quickly one of their intimates.

Richard Burton, then entering on old age, was nearer to Harry's mentality perhaps than any of his contemporaries. My brother regarded him almost with reverence, in the light of a master, not in one great work only, such as African exploration, but in his wonderful many-sidedness, which revealed no shallows in its great breadth, despite the venomous

criticism of his persistent enemies. There can be little doubt that we are better tempered nowadays and not nearly so vitriolic. Burton himself had mellowed, and whatever subject he touched upon in conversation became of absorbing interest. But his very cleverness stood in his way, and was a rock of offence to pompous dullards whom family influence had entrenched in the Foreign Office. There was more than one close analogy between Burton's thwarted and chequered career and my brother's in after years. Burton had found his Elba at Trieste as simple Consul, and would have been treated on a par there with our then most unwisely and unjustly slighted commercial advisers had not Lady Burton, owing to her family's ancestral connection with the picturesque Holy Roman Empire, been *persona grata* with the Imperial Austrian Court. The comradeship of a wife accustomed from girlhood to the mentality of Privileged People, and the pursuit of literature, in time, made Burton's official marooning on the Mediterranean more tolerable, as was precisely the case with my brother in after years.

There had also come into the Foreign Office in the 'Eighties some extremely agreeable and talented men of wide interests and sympathies, so that the close of Burton's official career and the early part of my brother's was rendered pleasanter in consequence. Harry had been encouraged by one of his new-found Foreign Office friends to send in his application for employment in the British Consular Service in Africa. Soon after doing so, he was given the double vice-consular post of the Oil Rivers and the Cameroons, under the genial direction of Consul Hewett, whom

he was soon to practically succeed as Acting Consul. He had just seen enough of this richly forested deltaic country on his way out to the Congo to make him long to explore its hinterland and administer it as a British possession of immense potential wealth and interest.

But the British Government had given up the great Cameroons Mountain and the immense Protectorate named after it to Germany, though we had been prior possessors, except for a very tiny concession of a few miles which the Germans had obtained by deed of purchase. When Harry first arrived he had jurisdiction over the remaining little British colony of Victoria on the slopes of the Cameroons Mountain and the opposite island of Mondole till these in turn were likewise given up to Germany for twenty-eight years.

My brother's first and most frequent home in West Africa was on this little island of Mondole. Here he led at intervals a Robinson Crusoe existence greatly to his taste. He was never a 'sociable' man in the commonly accepted meaning of the word, and far preferred occasional intercourse with one or two choice spirits of tastes and interests similar to his own to consorting with convivial company with whom he had nothing in common but a white skin. He appreciated the occasional visit of a British warship to his island and seems to have invariably got on very well with British Naval men. He was specially appreciative of the friendship of Admiral Sir Walter Hunt-Grubbe – a brilliantly clever man. He fitted up tennis courts for them on the island and enjoyed their moonlight con-

certs. Yet he heaved a very secret sigh of pleasure when these jolly, pleasant companions of a day steamed away and left him monarch of all he surveyed.

It was a survey difficult to match for beauty anywhere. His island rose steeply in richly wooded cliffs to a little grassy plateau six hundred feet above the sea – a sort of Hog's Back, about a quarter of a mile broad. Across a narrow strait to the north-west rose the huge mass of the Cameroons Mountain. The Ambas Bay Islands trailed away from it towards the faint blue pyramid volcano on the great Spanish island of Fernando Po, twenty miles away, which he occasionally visited. A distressingly loquacious builder came out from England to put his sectional timber house together. He chose the site for it – a shelf on the steep side of the island, with a forested hill behind, shading it from the fiercest sun. It was fanned by the cool Atlantic breeze blowing up from the ever-changing broad expanse of sea, on one side as landlocked as a great lake, on the other rolling away to far Brazil. He saw and studied every sea change. Sometimes the waters of the Gulf would mirror the violet buttresses of the Cameroons and glassily reflect the transient glow of sunset or dawn, or the long silver pathway of the moon. At hot noontide each dancing wavelet was a dazzling point of light. In the cooler hours they spread illimitably, like vast meadows, cloud-shadowed in violet patches on a field of varying green and blue. Then he would leave the shade of his broad verandah, vaulted like the aisle of a church, and clamber to the summit of his little kingdom, to

THE CAMEROONS FROM MONDOLE ISLAND

From a sketch by Sir Harry Johnston, reproduced by permission of the Illustrated Newspapers, Ltd.

watch the evening flight of parrakeets, which, by the way, he re-inforced by importing and liberating the brightest birds he could buy, of New as well as Old World origin.

He repeated in much greater tranquillity and security his Kilimanjaro farm and garden venture, oddly blended with a Zoo of unfettered, uncaged animals from the mainland, including a most gentlemanly chimpanzee. The last-named could not bear to be parted from him. The island was as healthy as it was lovely, having none of the deadly swamps which made parts of the opposite mainland so unsafe to live on. Yet, like every tropical paradise, it had unsuspected perils and tragedies.

Virapan, Harry's faithful Indian servant, who had risked his life for him on several occasions in East Africa, got sunstroke bathing, ran amok, and stabbed two of his fellow-servants. When my brother came to their rescue, Virapan hesitated for an instant, and flung the dripping knife away lest he should be tempted to murder his master. There was then on Mondole a Cuban convict who had escaped from the Spanish prison on Fernando Po. He knew all about stabbing and being stabbed, and Harry quaintly called him in as an expert. He saved the life of one of the injured men, but the other died, nursed most tenderly by his assailant, who was the man's best friend, and retained no memory of his own homicidal impulse.

Misfortune overtook my brother's next servant, also a Mission boy, a Negro named Solomon. He was sent in charge of a boat to the mainland with some other men, to cut timber. In his absence, Harry sat

painting on the verandah, till, looking up, he saw Solomon come quietly up to the house and pass into it. But when he wanted his tea he rang for him in vain, and was going to look for him when some dripping boatmen came up from the island shore with a tale of disaster: their returning boat had capsized in mid-channel, and Solomon and two others, though splendid swimmers, had never come to the surface, which was tantamount to saying they had been eaten by sharks. My brother's vision of Solomon coming into the house synchronized with the time at which his surviving companions said he had met with his death. As Harry was a pronounced sceptic regarding most psychic phenonema, it adds to the evidential value of his own experience, explain it how one may.

Harry's normally peaceful island life was of necessity frequently interrupted by spells of work on the mainland. He longed too to explore the still unknown interior. But part of this, which had been regarded as debatable country or regarded as certain to be British, was now in German hands. The German officials at first made themselves thoroughly disagreeable to both British and natives, tried to carry everything with a high hand, and forbade my brother to travel in the hinterland of their new Protectorate. With German merchants and scientists, not connected with officialdom, Harry was then and always on the best of terms, excepting that the Woermann Shipping Company and the Bâle Missionaries were actively anti-British. The Governor, a hard-drinking nephew of Prince Bismarck, with all his uncle's brutality, accused Harry of inciting

the natives against him, and threatened to imprison him if he came within his reach again. My brother complained to the Foreign Office, and Lord Rosebery demanded and obtained from the Germans a publicly tendered apology. Harry found this the more disagreeable on account of the immense quantities of alcohol it was necessary to consume, while sweltering under a tightly fitting official uniform, as a pledge to Anglo-German peace and good will. He had deplored the end of Lord Salisbury's brief Government in 1886, but he soon registered hearty approval of Lord Rosebery's conduct of foreign affairs where they touched on our relations with the Germans in Africa. He wrote to his father:

> 'I am much encouraged by the manner in which the Foreign Office views my work. My despatches seem to have met with marked approval from Lord Rosebery, who has not only sent me special permission to carry out some of my pet projects of exploration but has also directed that certain funds should be placed at my disposal. Though conciliatory, he will not allow any German bullying out here. Nobody seeks a quarrel with the Germans. But because they cannot suddenly create a colonial empire like that which has taken us centuries to build up, there is no reason in their trying furtively to nibble off corners of our territories which they happen to covet.'

On the other hand, my brother was quick to realize and acknowledge how much better treated our commerce was in German than in French Africa, and he was to have plenty of practical experience of both.

Any restriction on his freedom to pierce the secrets of the still unknown interior of West Africa irked Harry grievously, making him irritable and rather unkindly critical, for the time being, of the civilized, but not always cultured, white and black men who lived between his isle of Eden and the great Unknown. If I record his temporary ebullitions of discontent, it need not always be assumed that they represented his maturer judgment as faithfully as they register his acute perception of momentary details.

'As long as I am travelling,' he writes home at this time, 'I am happy in an excitement that never palls. The sport, the encounters with interesting savages, the wonderful scenery never fail to move me to sweet contentment. But I vegetate among commonplace Europeans and semi-civilized blacks. . . . At —— there are eight Mission women. Unfortunately, only one is fairly young and moderately pretty, and even she has no mind. In my official capacity, and in uniform, so that I looked more than ever like a nice little boy, I went to a Mission service last night. The Mission is the narrow-mindedest, barest, hardest, silliest sort – typical of the unlovely Protestantism of Northern Britain. The ceremony was *awful*. First of all we had tea – all the woman in badly washed, limp white dresses with faded blue waist bands. They had all lost their figures – if they had ever had any – and their complexions were wax-like, glistening with perspiration on the knobs of their brows and the prominent cheekbones of their Caledonian faces. Conversation was as flat as their figures. We all drank weak tea in mincing gulps, and held pieces

of oily bread and butter between fingers and thumb. After all had protested that they really – "Oh, *no*, thank you, really couldn't" eat any more, everyone tried to wipe their streaming faces with little off-hand, dégagé dabs, as though they hypocritically assumed they weren't warm in the least and had no idea that their collars were sodden with perspiration. Then we adjourned to the schoolhouse. Here the temperature was about a hundred, for dozens of petroleum lamps were burning. A circle of native converts tainted the atmosphere with their strong, repulsive odour. Their women were great masses of shapeless corpulence, ill-confined in ugly print dresses. The men were clad in garments you may see fairly imitated at Moore and Burgess minstrels. The majority are exotic – imported slaves from Sierra Leone.

After isolated remarks of extra insipidity let fall by different people who wished to seem at ease and yet hesitated to commence a sustained conversation when prayer was imminent, a flat silence settled on the assembly. Then a stout lady waddled to the table, and a thin lady slid on to the seat before the harmonium. The stout lady knelt down with a bump and prayed in a strong Scotch accent. Then we sang a hymn to the groans, squeaks and asthmatic wheezings of the harmonium accompaniment. After this, the stout lady's small, warm husband read a chapter of Joshua – wars, plagues, etc. Not a word of the tender New Testament. This was followed by an exposition, one hour long, by a lantern-jawed Scotchman with melancholy eyes. He lost himself and us in a laboured and far-fetched interpretation of the chapter, in which only the views of a particular branch of Presbyterians were

reflected. Then, thank goodness, the proceedings broke up, we passed from this religious Turkish bath into the sweet, cool outer air, where the great full moon was lighting up the peaceful palms and the stately bread fruit trees, and the fire flies were flitting about the dusky lanes. The sweet odours of a thousand flowering bushes mingled with the moist freshness of the humid earth.'

His experiences in the Consular courts were also not without humour to mitigate the humdrum routine on the coast. He writes to his father:

'Against the administration of emetics or floggings to uncongenial aunts I have steadily set my face, though I have sometimes felt a lurking sympathy with the impulsive nephews. There really is an extraordinary set against maiden aunts in this country. Only yesterday Consul Hewett had to decide on a case where a somewhat puny nephew had caused to be flogged an aunt of massive build and strapping size. After careful sifting of the evidence, Consul Hewett decided that the aunt's conduct had been *so* exasperating that he would only award the nominal damages of three shillings. The aunt became so abusive that she had to be removed from the court.

On the other hand, finding that the sons of chiefs when they indulged in the equivalent of University rags – tipsy brawls and molestation of harmless people of the humbler sort – were deemed exempt from whipping on account of their rank, Harry proved by his sentences the deterrent effect of a well-deserved smart to their pride and persons: "The young Mohawks go about looking very

crestfallen, jeered at by all the women and little boys."'

In 1887 my brother began to survey the unmapped, debatable country between the British and German spheres. He was now in command on all this coast, Consul Hewett having been invalided home. There were treaties to be made with frontier tribes, lest the Germans should further extend their borders at our expense. But these frontier tribes were often cannibals. With characteristic thoroughness and humour combined, Harry at this period made a most careful study of the ethics of cannibalism. His treatise on the subject was read with the more interest when it was reported in the Press that he had himself been eaten. But it meant white horror and anguish to our family when this false rumour with gruesome headlines appeared in the morning papers. What really happened was this:

Starting out in a large canoe fitted with a little covered cabin in the middle of it, my brother ascended the Cross River, through a stretch of wild, forested country inhabited only by chimpanzees and elephants. When his canoe next reached a clearing and cultivated land, the river banks on either side were lined with armed men of particularly savage and ferocious aspect. While he was debating within himself the advisability of landing among such a threatening crowd, many of whom appeared to be drunk with palm wine, it being market day, his fate was decided by the house-canoe sticking fast on a sand spit which all but blocked the passage of the river. Immediately

a number of the armed savages rushed into the shallows and made the crew and its commander their prisoners. My brother was seized by a gigantic naked Samson and carried like a child into the adjacent village. He had time to observe his men go blue with terror while their captors made horrid gestures portraying the preliminaries to a cannibal feast. Then he was deposited like a parcel inside a hut, and the door was fastened upon him, admitting only a chink of sunlight into the interior gloom. Footsteps receded and silence fell, save for a distant clamour of voices in the village to which his men had been driven at the spear point like a flock of sheep marked for slaughter. There was a crackling of newly kindled wood fires and the pungent smell of wood smoke; also another smell – the nauseous charnel house stench of a butchery. As his eyes grew accustomed to the gloom of his prison after the white glare of the tropical sun outside, he realized the source of this sickening odour. He was in a larder, a veritable Blue Beard's cupboard. Several dismembered bodies of human beings were hanging round the walls on hooks, and a whole freize of mummified heads grinned at him as he withdrew his hand in horror from contact with a greenish-black ham. When he had had plenty of time to wonder how soon his own limbs would be smoked and added to this collection, he heard swift footsteps approaching, and his gigantic captor appeared. Saying something in an incomprehensible tongue, the man picked him up in the same manner as before and bore him towards the crowd in the market place, where the fires had nearly reached

the fierce heat required for singeing and roasting. A tipsilly noisy crowd was pressing round a penned off space in which his men were huddled together, except one of them – the only available interpreter. This man – Joseph Eyamba – was talking earnestly and vehemently with the village chief. Presently he told my brother quickly that though things had looked very bad at first, all was well for the moment. He had said that Harry was the only son of a great white Queen across the sea, who would exact the most terrible vengeance on anyone harming her offspring but would confer powerful magic on those who received his embassy with friendship and respect.

With all the aplomb of a successful commercial traveller, Harry then and there produced a despatch box from the canoe and extracted from it a Treaty form. He next proceeded to propound to the chief and the more sober of his braves how much better it would be to 'make a book' with him than a meal off him. The point was further debated between the pro-Treaty and the pro-Dinner parties. When the alternatives had been duly weighed in the balance, Harry managed to get the chief men to make their crosses or splodges on the Treaty form, which insured that Victoria was by the grace of God not only Queen of Great Britain and Ireland and Empress of India, but also Suzerain of Ededama, the name of this cannibal country, which not even her Acting Consul had heard of before.

After this, as the assembly was getting uproariously drunk, and might have regretted the deal, my brother did not prolong his stay in this new bit of British

territory. Yams and sheep were given him in exchange for cloth and beads, and an old gentleman who appeared to be the head medicine man and Prime Minister of Ededama removed from his own neck and fastened round Harry's a circlet of human knucklebones, rather like a Lord Mayor's chain of office, a gruesome relic which I often played with afterwards as a boy.

In the same year – 1887 – and at no great distance from Ededama, he had another gruesome experience in the course of painting the map red. He had penetrated to a forest settlement in hitherto unexplored country, and found himself among a friendly, quite naked tribe of exceptionally fine physique. He quickly put himself on good terms with them, and presented to them the alternative of alliance with either Germany or England, with the intimation that there could be no third course. Personality is everything with Negroes, and principle a mere afterthought. They liked the personality of the British agent and said so. So they made a 'book' with him and closed the proceedings with a banquet. The dining hall was a sanded space in a grove of noble trees, illuminated by the full moon and the flickering flames of fragrant wood fires. Dancing girls who had anointed their lissome bodies with a glistening ruddy pigment swayed rhythmically from moonlight and firelight into shadow. Then they ran among the diners with delicacies served on plantain leaves, and cool, sparkling 'wine' in hollow gourds.

At the conclusion of the banquet there was a solemn hush, as though for grace. A great shell,

filled with a pinkish paste, was passed from hand to hand like a loving cup. First the Elders of the tribe partook and then presented it to their white brother. He put a big pinch on his tongue and swallowed it, as they had done, and noted that it was saltish and pleasant to the taste.

But Harry was never content to perform any action or see one performed of which he did not understand fully the nature and purport. So he asked:

'Is this goat that I have eaten?'

'It is not.'

'Is it pig?'

'It is not.'

'Is it fowl, or perhaps tender monkey?'

'It is neither.'

'With what then have you regaled me?'

'It is man. It is our great Chief and Father, with whom you are now one – bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, a blood brother to us indeed.'

It transpired that among this tribe posthumous honour was preferred to political pensions. They were Conservative people, and kept a club for the superannuated, who were very literally put on the shelf. After careful smoking and salting, it was believed that chopped Chancellor or potted Premier would continue to impart to their adherents the essence of astuteness and audacity in banquets which they graced with their attenuated bodily presence. Harry also humorously maintained that this form of cannibalism tended to foster family affection and to assuage the bitter feelings between nephews and

aunts above alluded to. Here are two of some verses he wrote under the heading of

A CANNIBAL'S ODE TO HIS AUNT

Search through the crowded market,
Visit each cannibal feast.
Where will you meet
With a corpse so sweet
As that of the dear Deceased?

Juicy she was and tender,
And little did we discern
The good we should reap
From the cost of her keep.
She has made us a noble return!

In a serious vein, my brother maintained that not all forms of cannibalism were as cruel or degrading as the pythonic sacrifices of Pagan villages, where a mother had to give thanks for divine favour while her child was being crushed in the toils of the tribal totem, a sacred serpent. He gave full credit to the missionaries for stopping that horror, and rebuked their critics who asked querulously why the natives could not be left alone and their religious ideas, 'state of innocence', etc., respected. He put it on record that until the missionaries had the pluck to take the law into their own hands and incite their converts to kill these petted pythons and the monstrous Monitor lizards which were likewise regarded as sacred, the British Government actually fined heavily any European for doing so, lest the 'religious' susceptibilities of the modern Molochites should injure

the similarly sacred trade in palm oil. That was the Ark of the Covenant to at least one of our wealthy trading firms, and in 1887-1888, by curtailing the monopoly of this firm (politically powerful at home) and the exactions of a cruel and crafty native chief in alliance with it, my brother narrowly missed wrecking his own career. The chief in question, named Jaja, ruled at the mouth of the Opobo River. Harry thus describes his antecedents in a letter home:

'Jaja was a runaway slave whom the British had protected from recapture by the King of Bonny. Being an astute man, he made money in trade and spent it in slaves and guns. With the latter he enslaved the surrounding tribes, and attained such power that the British recognized him as king of the country. He made heaps of money by acting as middleman between the produce of the interior and the English traders on the coast, who had to pay him a commission of 25 per cent. on his produce. The merchants, in order to avoid this ruinous commission, tried to go straight to the people of the interior, and my own dominant idea has been to get the European merchants away from the unhealthy coast into the healthy interior. So we have had a tremendous tussle, Jaja and I. He imposed an oath on the natives of the interior by which they were threatened with death and torture if they traded with the white man independently, and he enforced the keeping of this oath by direct acts of vengeance on those who broke it. One unfortunate woman who had attempted to sell some oil to white traders he had tied up hand and foot to a tree in the market place. All were forbidden to give her

food or water. In three days she was dead, only a few feet from a beautiful stream. When I arrived on the scene, little was left of the woman but a bag of bones. The poor hands still preserved a supplicating position, as though she had mutely implored a drink – just one drink – of water at the last.'

My brother had grimly sat down and sketched this scene on the spot in order to support his denunciations of Jaja, and reproduced the picture subsequently in his *History of a Slave*. It still hangs in a sort of Chamber of Horrors in his house together with other pictures of cruelties, which could only be quickly ended by a vivid appeal to those whose ignorance, indolence or indifference prevented strong action being taken.

Independently of Harry's investigations, the following story was vouched for in the Press:

> To seal a treaty with a confederate middleman named Amachri, Jaja went with him and a body of other chiefs and their wives to the mouth of the New Calabar River. Here a slave victim was dragged forward in the grip of four men, who held him down while a fifth with a sharp knife and a hatchet split him in half from the crown of his head in precisely the same manner as a sheep is chopped by a butcher, the only difference being that the sheep is not alive when this operation is performed.

This gentle Jaja, whose only principle was that those who wished to trade in palm oil must first oil his own palm, proceeded to entrench himself by conferring a secondhand monopoly on the one British firm able to pay his price, and to extend by force of

arms the area in which he could exclude all others. My brother's answer to this wily policy is outlined in his letters to his family:

'Free trade must be established. The mere presence of white men lets in light on these dark and cruel lands. Apart from his crimes and intrigues, Jaja is not a bad fellow, as African chiefs go. He talks English fluently. All his sons have been to boarding schools in England, and are named after the days of the week. Sunday Jaja is now in England, accompanying a Jubilee deputation. One boy, who came after the days of the week had been exhausted, was named Napoleon Bonaparte Wellington Jaja. Jaja's chief counsellor is an American Negress named Emma Jaja Johnson. She is a person of literary tastes, composes poetry and recites. At first she impresses you by her exceedingly prim and ladylike manner; but as dinner wears on (Jaja gives excellent dinners, and has quite a taste in really good dry champagne) her dignity dissolves, and at last Jaja has to order a slave to take the bottle from her vacillating grasp. Emma's dinner dress is made up very stylishly with a large crinolette, described by Jaja with a grin as "all same rat trap". He also vouchsafes the information that she wears nothing else than meets the eye. . . . During dinner, several of Jaja's wives would peep in at the door and giggle. Apparently they were giggling at Emma, because once she abruptly rose and boxed their ears. This is a strange country, with strange conditions of people. Cannibalism is still occasionally practised by men who telegraph their business orders to Manchester firms. Chiefs' wives array themselves in dinner dresses scarcely more than a

year behind the fashion, and after the meal is over take off everything but an embroidered handkerchief, with a sigh of relief.'

Jaja's little dinners and sense of humour had made him quite popular with Naval men. He was fiercely backed by the one commercial firm which he had admitted into his monopoly, at a price, and so he thought he could fool the little Consul on the coast indefinitely. But, finding admonition and protest of no avail, my brother summoned Jaja to meet him on the beach, having obtained, as he thought, sufficient authorization from the Foreign Office to deal with him drastically if he proved recalcitrant. Jaja came swaggering on to the shore with a bodyguard of about a thousand men and many wives. Into this armed crowd my brother marched with a force of seventy British bluejackets from a tiny gunboat which stood by under orders not to 'use force'. It was sufficient to display it. After repeating to Jaja the accusations levied against him, Harry presented him with these alternatives: either to come on board and have his conduct judged at Accra with every facility for legal defence, or to withdraw with his superior force and leave the British Government to judge him in his absence. Jaja thought it better tactics to stand his trial voluntarily before he was fetched as the sequel to a war, and my brother, by making him see the wisdom of this course saved the country both expense and bloodshed. Jaja had a fair trial, and was exiled to the pleasant island of Grenada in the West Indies, in full enjoyment of his ill-gotten gains and a prudent selection of his wives. But the wives he had left

behind him gave a grand tea party to celebrate his departure and made haste to console themselves for his absence once they had been assured of his deportation.

This, however, was not the end of the business. Jaja's merchant friends dressed Sunday Jaja in his best, sent deputations to the Foreign Office, had questions asked in Parliament about 'the tyranny of this prancing pro-Consul', and carried on a Press campaign for years against Harry. The politicians who almost canonized Jaja were just those who posed in Parliament and out of it as the special champions of the weak and oppressed, the most determined opponents of slavery, and the special protagonists of Free Trade!

In order to satisfy them, Lord Salisbury ordered that my brother's conduct of the affair should be inquired into by Admiral Sir W. Hunt-Grubbe. He underwent something equivalent to a court martial on the Admiral's flagship. The Court completely acquitted him of all blame and then adjourned to a festive dinner. At that time Harry had no one but friends at the Foreign Office, and they were all delighted. But the Firm whose monopoly under Jaja he had ended, and the politicians in collaboration with it, continued to assert that Jaja had been kidnapped by dishonourable means and was a much wronged person. Everyone else thought otherwise. But the aggrieved Firm controlled many votes, and Lord Salisbury, while fully approving of my brother's conduct, did not dare appoint him permanently as Consul where he had acted so uncompromisingly in

that capacity. Instead, he sought other ways of rewarding him for so daringly and deftly removing a thorn from the West African body politic. He recalled him to England in the middle of 1888 and had a long talk with him in private on African affairs in general. The next week-end he was asked to Hatfield, much to the chagrin of a highly placed official at the Foreign Office, jealous of privilege shown to one so young in the Service, whom he persisted thereafter in representing as an 'outsider', with the implication that my brother was in some way unworthy to be admitted into the higher ranks of officialdom. This persistent critic and opponent – Sir Clement Hill – somehow engendered the idea that Harry was a rash, pushful person, whose very activities detracted from his dignity as an official.

But Lord Salisbury knew better the difference between pushfulness and push, and appreciated talents which were a positive offence to a certain type of Permanent Official. He, too, had pioneered in his youth in far corners of the Empire, and it mattered not a jot to him or to his equally wise and witty wife if their guest were a Vice-Consul or a Viceroy, provided he was master of what he was asked to talk about, and beyond that had not got a one-track mind. So it came about that in walks and talks Lord Salisbury began a close acquaintance with his still very boyish-looking protégé. In the ensuing New Year honours my brother was gazetted a Companion of the Bath, of which Order he was at the time the youngest member.

Yet his upward path was not without pitfalls. In

1886 his father wrote to him a letter of both encouragement and warning: forecasting for him a brilliant future, but cautioning him to exercise his sense of humour more warily, since some of his published satires seemed likely to give offence to the objects of them and call down censure from his official superiors. This is what he wrote in reply:

> 'The Foreign Office allows its officials a considerable amount of latitude in the expression of their opinions. As a matter of fact, if any bigwig in that Department happens to read my essay it will probably amuse him. I am encouraged to know your prognostication of my career. I do believe in myself, more because of my strong will and intense ambition than for any particular qualities that I imagine myself to possess. Indeed I am saddled with many disadvantages – my insignificant appearance, my poverty, my lack of family interest in Government circles. I have to fight the world alone. I must creep when I would fly. But if I live I will be great some day, and may *you* live to see me so.'

He was right in thinking that he amused the bigwigs. Men like Lord Salisbury, Sir Percy Anderson and Sir Villiers Lister, and his personal friends then in the junior ranks of the Foreign Office chortled over his sallies, his verses and his caricatures, but some few others, not yet powerful, but destined to become so in course of time by seniority, and to change the genial tone of the Permanent Foreign Office officialdom at home towards the Consular ranks abroad, did undoubtedly mark him down for strait-jacketing. To show that this is not merely my

own or his interpretation of after events, I venture to quote a letter I have recently received from Mr. Edward Vicars, who was one of the most intimate and appreciative of his Foreign Office friends:

> 'Your brother was the most brilliant man I ever met. His sense of humour was so complete – so utterly devoid of those disconcerting holes one so often finds in the humour of others. He never failed to see the ridiculous side of any situation or to make the most of any story against himself, and his irresistible way of telling it invested it with a kind of sparkle. That sense of the grotesque was a priceless gift for his friends, who revelled in it; but it was too lambent and irrepressible for official life, and I have no hesitation in saying that he would have had a more completely successful career as a public servant if he only could have kept it in check. For he made enemies among those in whose power it was to help him on, many of whom having obtained eminence through a total lack of any appreciation of the ridiculous were scarcely likely to regard his nimble wit with anything but disapproval, especially if they suspected – sometimes with good reason – that its shafts did not spare their lofty selves!'

Someone had already dubbed the Foreign Office 'a nest of singing-birds', in allusion to the number of budding poets among its officials. But Harry's was a mocking muse. Five years after the date which this story has reached, but whilst the high gods still nodded and smiled, Mr. Gerald Spicer of the African Department (afterwards in charge of our Legation at

Vienna) brought about a great innovation in the Foreign Office by the introduction of female typists, messengers, etc. I have reason to think that, being blest with a sense of humour himself, he joined in the general laugh when the following verses, excusable by their entirely imaginative basis, save for the above-mentioned fact, bubbled from Harry's never idle pen:

DID YOU NOT KNOW?

Did you not know that Spicer kept a home,
Finished and furnished in 1894,
Whereto the Damsels of the Street might come,
Worn with Love's War?

There to repose, re-paint, recuperate,
There to renew their fascinating ways,
Gratis their lodging and the food they ate
For seven days.

Did you not know? . . .

Here none without encouragement are left
Who wish to seek an honest livelihood,
Whose looks are unimpaired, whose hands are deft,
Whose manners good.

For such as these our Spicer holds in view
Employment; and the Foreign Office aids
By letting him engage a chosen few
As waiting maids.

Here, in grim Downing Street's Quadrangle, they
Attain Respectability at last.
The Genius Loci in its lofty way
Ignores their past.

One houri brings E. Walrond Clarke his lunch;
Two houris on Sir Clement's wishes wait.
Three houris ply with sandwiches and punch
The Secretary of State.

It amused my brother to read exaggerated Press reports as to the number of languages he was credited with having mastered, though it must be conceded that his achievements in that respect left little room for exaggeration. One day he solemnly docketed a mock despatch in exact imitation of Foreign Office procedure 'On the Advantages of Communion with a Polyglot Consul General', and sent it to a high official. It consisted of eight verses, of which the first will suffice for quotation:

I can talk to you in Dutch,
Though you may not like it much;
I can chaff you in grammatical Pushtoò;
Then apologize in Spanish
Till your angry feelings vanish,
And you listen to my tales in Telugù.

As a pictorial caricaturist, Harry's Puckish sense of humour caused even more joy to the irreverent Foreign Office juniors than his naughty verses, but these pictures not infrequently got into the wrong hands, and the solid and solemn head of a Department saw nothing funny in the representation of himself as a pelican.

It was characteristic of Harry that he was much less in awe of mandarins than of men-servants. He did make attempts to be decorous before his valets, but on one occasion at least he found it difficult to be so.

When in London in the late 'Eighties and during the following decade, he occupied a flat in Queen Anne's Mansions, St. James' Park, finding that lofty pile of ugliness conveniently near the Foreign Office. While there, he persuaded his family to give a fancy dress ball, and himself decided to go as Puss in Boots. He ordered the appropriate cat costume and impatiently awaited its arrival. He was consumed with anxiety lest it might not fit when it did come, and when his man-servant, Challenger, brought in a huge parcel on the very day of the ball, eyeing it curiously, Harry made haste to send him out on some errand, and at once put on the cat mask and skin, which he found somewhat impeded his hearing and sight. Here was an opportunity for rehearsal. He gavotted about, mewing realistically, and rubbing himself against the furniture. Suddenly, his undignified antics were arrested by a dry cough. Regaining an upright position, he faced his petrified valet, staring in shocked solemnity at the vision of a huge black cat with glassy green eyes. With a brave attempt at natural speech, he said in muffled tones, 'It's only me, Challenger. I . . . I was looking for a pin!'

Harry's fanciful sense of humour was oddly blended with stern realism, and when there was reason for portraying horrors his pen and pencil could delineate the most macabre ones. Nervous newspaper reporters who sought him out at Queen Anne's Mansions were sometimes kept waiting in an anteroom which was a veritable chamber of horrors – its walls hung with upwards of forty gruesome and forcible sketches illustrative of incidents of the Slave Trade

which he had either seen or heard described – battle and murder, and by no means sudden death. These were done to illustrate his anti-slavery propagandist novel called *The History of a Slave*. Such realism was not to the taste of the doctrinaire do-nothings and and prudish platitudinarians of that period. They complained that Mr. H. H. Johnston was an English Zola, and denounced his illustrations of unclothed Negroes as pornographic. But people with robuster minds were shocked indeed, not at the portrayal of primitive races as they really were, but by the fact, so graphically illustrated, that slavery was still very much alive, in its most cruel forms, in those parts of Africa where Muhammadan influence was dominant and where European control was not yet effective. From that time opinion in England hardened perceptibly in favour of a forward move in Africa, and scarcely had my brother finished fighting slavery with his pen and still more eloquent brush when he was called upon to combat it with the sword.

CHAPTER VI

In November, 1889, my brother was appointed Consul-General for Portuguese South-East Africa and the No Man's Land behind it. Here, as elsewhere in Africa, national ambitions had been gathering momentum. In order to restrain Portuguese claims over Nyasaland, Harry was first of all sent by Lord Salisbury to Lisbon. Travelling overland, he stopped on the way at Biarritz to deliver despatches to Queen Victoria. He negotiated all the better with the Portuguese Ministers because he knew their language, and had nearly got them to agree to the present frontier of Nyasaland, when, at the instance of Luis de Soveral, they put forward a last-minute claim to part of the Shire Highlands. Our official frontier at this date stopped short at the south bank of the upper Zambesi; but British missionaries and a few pioneer coffee planters were already established settlers on the Shire Highlands, in close connection with the African Lakes Company, commercially interested in the navigation of Lake Nyasa and its tributary waterways. For these reasons Lord Salisbury determined to sanction the extension of the British sphere northwards. For the funds required for this forward move, he sent my brother to negotiate with Mr. Goschen's Secretary in order to induce the new Liberal Unionist Chancellor of the Exchequer (whom his predecessor, Lord Randolph Churchill, had recently so historically 'forgotten') to sanction public money being expended in

furthering our interests in South-Central Africa. But Goschen was a Little Englander, and proffered nothing but cold water for the further extension of our Empire in Africa.

As has happened so often before in the story of our Empire, official neglect was compensated for by private patriotism and enterprise, not, however, without some evil accruing by the mingling of private aims with public policy. Cecil Rhodes, then a scarcely known member of the Cape Parliament, and thought to be a 'Pro-Boer', was in London, and met my brother at a dinner party. When the two began talking about Africa, their dinner and all their fellow-guests faded from their minds. They talked there till midnight, and adjourned to Rhodes's hotel, to continue the discussion without a stop till dawn! They breakfasted in their evening dress. When Harry left in order to change into clothes proper to a call at the Foreign Office he might well have been mistaken for one who had wined too well. He was intoxicated indeed, but not with wine. He had found, quite unexpectedly, a man with visions like his own, of adding empire to empire, and, what was more, he had found the money! Rhodes had made to him definite proposals for financial assistance, and had backed them by a cheque, which my brother at once deposited at a bank.

The next step was to lay Cecil Rhodes's offer of co-operation before Lord Salisbury, who still only had the vaguest knowledge of the future Colossus of South Africa. Lord Salisbury agreed to Rhodes financing my brother's activities outside Nyasaland, but had no

wish for his Chartered Company to acquire any rights in the latter district. Therefore, as regards Nyasaland, Harry was solely the servant of the Foreign Office. But in what became Northern Rhodesia he was the nominee of Rhodes, and in that capacity was partly dependent on him for funds necessary to organize an administration of officials who were Rhodes's employés in a sense in which my brother was not. For he owed nothing personally to Rhodes, and was responsible to the Foreign Office, which Rhodes on the contrary held in very scant respect. It is not surprising that in time this dual capacity entailed difficulties and discord.

But there was no time in 1889 for imagining Home and Colonial jars in jurisdiction. It was a question of saving all South-Central Africa and perhaps more for Great Britain. A Major Serpa Pinto was credited with the intention of procuring for Portugal, by force, countries to the south and east of Lake Nyasa which Lord Salisbury on Harry's return from Lisbon had refused to concede by agreement.

A last hitch occurred before my brother sailed, which, in the light of after events, is interesting history. It was given out that Joseph Chamberlain would oppose in the Commons Cecil Rhodes's application for a Charter. So my brother was deputed to interview Chamberlain (by no means an Imperialist in those days) and beg off his opposition. He found him as blank as his out-of-date maps concerning the geography of the South African Chartered Company's territories. But, on being assured that they were far to the north-west of any contact with the Boers,

Chamberlain consented to abstain from interference.

At this anxious time my brother wrote to Mr. W. T. Stead, then at the helm of the *Pall Mall Gazette:*

'I do not want to be "interviewed", because my connection with the Foreign Office somewhat fetters me. But I wish *very much* to talk to you about Africa generally. Whether we wish it or no – and the prematurely bald young men at the Foreign and Colonial Offices think it all a horrid bore, doncha know? – the African Question is being forced on the reluctant attention of our lethargic rulers – the great crisis in which a vast East, West and South African empire for the British will be either shaped or smothered. It is urgently necessary that rulers and people should have a definite policy to pursue. I read somewhere that somebody said the British soldiers were lions led by asses. This very much applies to the missionaries, explorers and traders who are striving to open up Africa for the British, and who are discouraged by our dubious, ill-instructed Ministers and officials. Whereas we are for ever doubting our own worthiness and right to rule, the Germans, French, Portuguese, etc., have no doubt whatever about theirs. So while we vacillate and dubitate and shiver they supplant us with their foisted rule in vast districts where for several decades our missionaries and traders have been preparing and tending a harvest which they are not allowed to reap. It is *sickening* to see the spite of the Germans against us in Africa. You would imagine at least that *we* had torn from them an Alsace-Lorraine. . . .

At present I am engaged on a study of a dead woman being torn to pieces by hyaenas – and I assure you the savagery my hunted spirit has put into those hyaenas' expression will prove appalling if the engraver does not blur it.'

Leaving an excellent Vice-Consul, Mr. W. A. Churchill, at his official Consulate-General at Moçambique, my brother lost no time in gaining his real sphere of action in the interior. Taking his old Kilimanjaro head man, Ali Kiongwe, he steamed in the gunboat *Stork* up the just discovered Chinde south of the Zambesi, and continued the journey in a flotilla of boats. He knew he had a tough struggle before him in the far interior, away from posts and civilized means of communication, and remembering scares his family had formerly received from Press rumours, he wrote to his eldest brother: 'Don't believe any reports about my capture, disappearance or decease, and *don't* divide my little possessions prematurely.'

After meeting an African Lakes Company steamer, he found his further progress threatened by two rivals: a hostile chief named Mlauri, and Colonel Serpa Pinto's powerful expedition. Disregarding advice not to put himself in the power of the Portuguese, Harry went to tea with Serpa Pinto and had a frank talk. He told him plainly that if he carried out his intention of invading what the British had marked out as their future sphere his action might lead to hostilities between England and Portugal. The situation was really comparable to Colonel Marchand's subsequent attempt to cut across the sphere of influence we had determined upon in the Egyptian Sudan. But the Portu-

guese Marchand was persuaded for the moment to stay his expedition, or deflect it, and let the British pass.

My brother determined to seize this respite and opportunity for making good British claims. But there was such a vast extent of country to cover as to make it necessary for him to secure the co-operation of a deputy of sufficient standing, experience and capability to act occasionally on his own responsibility, in a manner both bold and circumspect, such as could be supported by my brother himself when the treaties made were submitted for ratification by the Imperial Government.

By a fortunate chance he met on the river Mr. Alfred Sharpe, who as a free lance had fought the Arab Slave Traders here together with Captain (afterwards Sir Frederick) Lugard. After recovering from a wound in the leg, Mr. Sharpe had returned to Nyasaland to shoot elephants. Harry knew at once that he had run against the very man he was wanting so badly. He saw in him a sportsman in the best sense of the word, and found him willing to change his plans abruptly and serve on a roving vice-consular commission. This appointment was soon approved by the Foreign Office, and extended to a Deputy Commissionership when my brother was named Commissioner for the territories about to be annexed. Sir Alfred Sharpe, to give him his present title, was to succeed my brother after seven years in the Governorship of Nyasaland, as the Protectorate was ultimately named when its western extension had been transferred to Northern Rhodesia. The original name of British Central Africa was really the expression of my

brother's hope and aim, with the help of Sharpe and the late Mr. Alfred James Swann, to carry the flag not only to Lake Tanganyika (which was done), but to plant it at the northern end of that great waterway and so connect with the Uganda Protectorate, constituting a chain of posts to link the Cape with Cairo. North-westwards there were valuable metalliferous countries which the Congo Free State would annex if we did not.

Having despatched Mr. Sharpe on what seemed like an almost impossibly ambitious and difficult treaty-making journey, Harry proceeded to take stock of possible friends and enemies. He interviewed the savage Mlauri, and found that at the moment he disliked the Portuguese even more than the British. The next stage was to disembark at Katunga and in the course of a single gallop gain Mandala and Blantyre, three thousand feet higher, where lived the principal personalities among the missionaries and the African Lakes Company.

When in August, 1889, my brother first saw this Shire Highlands country it struck him as a most delectable land, to be made British at all costs. He wrote in that month to his father:

> 'In this little Arcadia, with mountains towering up to seven and eight thousand feet, there are sweet, English-looking farm houses, churches, cottages, roses, fat cattle, gobbling turkeys – a patch of England planted in Central Africa, a sight to rejoice poor Livingstone's ghost if it ever revisits the namesake of its birth place (Blantyre). The air is full of the scent of hay-making.'

After himself making treaties with the truculent Yao chiefs, Harry hastened to the north end of Lake Nyasa. Here he scored a great diplomatic success by making a treaty with Jumbe, the principal Arab potentate. He largely secured his good will by the gift of a bottle of Chartreuse, which Jumbe called 'the golden medicine' to smother his Muhammadan veto against alcohol. He declared it cured him of asthma, and implored my brother to try his healing powers on his Commander-in-Chief, who had swollen to an enormous size with Elephantiasis. With secret trepidation but an outward show of assurance, Harry made an incision and relieved the poor man greatly of the swelling and the liquid which caused it. Paraffin dressings exteriorly and chicken broth within completed the cure. His master, Sultan Jumbe, was sufficiently grateful to come to terms. For a small yearly subsidy, he agreed to give up the lucrative slave trade and to throw in his lot with the British against any threat from the Portuguese on the one hand and his fellow-Arabs on the other.

From this time onwards my brother displayed for propaganda purposes a most effective colour scheme, which never failed to appeal to those with whom he wished to make treaties, whatever race they might belong to. He displayed on his hat band, his writing paper, in his house decoration and in any other convenient way parallel bars of black, white and yellow. In British Central Africa, and afterwards when I was with him in Uganda, when a conference opened with black men or yellow (Asiatics), he would show them their own share in his tricolour and extract from it

the parable that the colour lines in Africa were parallel, not contrary, in direction and aim; that the interests of African, European and Asiatic should attain union in action, not by fusion, but by alliance. My brother even went so far as to advocate a flag for the whole British Empire on these lines, since there are far more coloured than white men in our league of nations.

After securing, as he thought, some valuable harbours and the highest, healthiest country hereabouts at the north end of Lake Nyasa (given away by our Government the year after to the Germans), Harry crossed the cool and healthy Nyasa-Tanganyika Plateau. Having reached the south end of Lake Tanganyika, he made preparations to traverse the whole length of that inland sea and annex its strategically valuable northern end to Great Britain. Just as he was preparing to himself forge the last link of the Cape-to-Cairo connection, very serious news reached him that the Portuguese, disregarding his warnings, had followed him into the Shire Highlands and proclaimed that country a Portuguese province, after coming into sanguinary collision with the natives to whom he had given British flags as an assurance that they were under our protection, thus securing Great Britain's prior claim to the country. Before retracing his steps in all haste to reach telegraphic communication with Lord Salisbury and investigate the extent of the Portuguese aggression, my brother deputed the late Mr. A. J. Swann to make treaties for him at the north end of Lake Nyasa, which was done. But Mr. Swann's treaties reached Europe just too late to be

recognized in the Anglo-German Convention, in which also the failure of Sir William Mackinnon to take up the treaties Harry had made on Kilimanjaro deprived British East Africa not only of that mountain, but also of access to Tanganyika from the east. So my brother's bid for an all-British link between British Central Africa and Uganda was not realized until our victory on other fronts in the Great War procured for us practical possession of the Tanganyika territory, never completely conquered by us on the spot, in spite of vast expenditure in men and money.

Writing in *East Africa* in 1927, Mr. Swann, looking backward on his pioneer days with my brother, relates: 'When I first met him he was riding on a donkey, with a sailor's straw hat on his head. Yet that great little man was capable of annexing half a continent without shedding the blood of black men. We were bitterly disappointed over the loss of our through-red route. Johnston's great asset was the power of getting out of his colleagues their very best, and we gave liberally in return, sparing no pains to back him up along the lines of true Imperialism. When the State showered honours upon him, he wrote to me saying "Take it as bestowed upon yourselves." To the thousands who now live in East Africa, I would most respectfully adjure that they build well on Johnston's foundations, bearing in mind that what he aimed at was freedom, justice and loyalty.'

Lord Salisbury's Government took strong action as soon as my brother telegraphed a *résumé* of the course taken by the Portuguese in Nyasaland as soon as his back was turned. But while asserting our prior claims,

Harry rendered to the Portuguese people, Government and agents fuller justice than was at that time accorded to them by the British Press and public. Hurrying back from far Tanganyika to the coast, he was actually stopped on the way by the self-constituted Portuguese 'Governor' of his own beloved Shire Province. But his arrest was far from being an act of aggression. His opponent gave him his mails, and added two hampers filled with delicacies, including champagne, all the more appreciated because he had gone short of food on his hurried return. 'We are both doing our best for our respective countries,' said his Portuguese host, 'and however much our political views may differ, there is no reason why one white man should quarrel with another in Central Africa.'

But there immediately ensued in Europe a momentary but violent Anglo-Portuguese crisis, the only quarrel the two nations have ever had in the course of their history. Lord Salisbury sent an ultimatum to Lisbon and threatened to withdraw our Minister, to send a fleet up the Tagus, and to hold the Cape Verde Islands and certain African ports as a pledge for the evacuation of Nyasaland. The British Legation in Lisbon was attacked by an angry mob, and Harry became in print and picture the hero and the villain of the disputants, and the subject of debate in their Parliaments. Mr. Labouchere did him much good by attacking him. The Portuguese Government resigned, though urged by the French Press to stand to its guns. Its successor recognized our claims to Nyasaland, and an Anglo-Portuguese convention was concluded which restored friendly relations between the two countries.

Harry's personal relations with and expressed opinions on the Portuguese were invariably most friendly, and never lacked consideration for their great achievements in the past. He could not help succeeding at their expense on this occasion, to the incidental benefit of his career; but a few years later he was to jeopardize very seriously that career out of a sense of pure justice towards them.

'A most excellent and admirable Consul is Mr. Johnston,' said Lord Salisbury in Parliament, and summoned him home to the conferences then taking place at the Foreign Office regarding our African conventions with Portugal and Germany which drew the political boundaries in the newest continent in a form which endured till the Great War. From now onwards my brother was fully prepared to work on terms of comradeship with the Germans in Africa, and recognized their right to 'a place in the sun' so long as they justified it by scientific, painstaking administration and an open, friendly tariff policy contrasting most favourably with that of France. But he was none the less alive to the vein of Prussian aggression which he had already been quick to resent on the Cameroons. To a *Pall Mall* interviewer in these early days, he said in a vein of prophecy:

'Do not underrate the Germans. Very possibly they may never be so successful in colonization as the English, but they have to be reckoned with for all that. In my opinion, they are our only serious rivals, the only people who will dispute with us the mastery of the world. The Russians will dispute with us only the mastery of Asia. But the Germans will meet us and

compete with us at every point, in the belief that some day the English world power will pass away, just as the Dutch power has passed.' This was said twenty-four years before the Great War. Though disappointed at our Government's failure to retain concessions he had obtained or administered on the healthy hill stations of Kilimanjaro, the Cameroons, and northern Nyasa, and the strategically valuable connecting link north of Lake Tanganyika, he did not cry over spilt milk, believing that there were still sufficient undeveloped territories in the world to give scope to the talents and energies of all civilized peoples willing to work side by side with one another in peace, fostering good relations by maintaining freedom in commerce and intercourse.

On the other hand, he was very angry at King Leopold, as Sovereign of the Congo State, playing the part of the Fox in the fable of the fight between the Lion and the Bear, and carrying off the titbit of the carcase, *i.e.,* the valuable copper mines of Katanga, thereby making a great inroad into British territory, quite outside the natural boundaries of the Congo basin.

Writing to Mr. W. T. Stead in August, 1890, he says:

> 'I send the map, and have coloured in the boundaries of our possessions according to recent agreements, assuming a little more where our possessions are separated by blank spaces unclaimed by any other Power. You will notice our new province of British Central Africa includes a little piece of territory which in some maps is given to the King of

the Belgians. (This is the country of Katanga.) It is really rightly ours, by treaty with the native ruler, and by the work of missionaries and traders. No Belgian has ever set foot there, so it is monstrous for Leopold the Wily to lay claim to it and so eat into the head of our new province – the old Fox! He means no good to England, I know, and you must not let him overreach us without protest.'

After taking part in international negotiations in London, my brother returned to our now nearly demarcated British Central African Protectorate as its first ruler. Our interests in its western extension, later to be fused with Rhodesia, had been wonderfully safeguarded by Mr. Alfred Sharpe, despatched by Harry on a treaty-making commission right up to the borders of the Congo State. Nearly all the chiefs were ready to 'take hold of the White Queen's leg,' as they termed their acceptance of our Protectorate, but they regarded the act of signing a treaty with a cross as dangerous 'medicine'. Union Jacks were, however, in great request, and one chief asked in return to be supplied with poison for his enemies.

To place Mr. Sharpe's western treaties in the hands of Cecil Rhodes, my brother had visited the latter in South Africa in the midsummer of 1890. To this conference came Mr. John Moir of the African Lakes Company, the explorer Joseph Thomson, who had also been treaty-making, and Mr. Archibald Colquhoun, the Administrator of Mashonaland. Harry went straight from this important conference to lay its proposals before Lord Salisbury in England. He rather quaintly presented the Marquis with a live turtle, se-

cured at Ascension, and was invited to its apotheosis as soup at Hatfield, and to the international conferences above alluded to, which generally began with Ambassadorial talks at the Premier's house parties. More than once the fate of millions of unsuspecting black men was settled in a three-cornered talk between Lord Salisbury, a foreign Minister, and my brother, as possessing the requisite local knowledge. It must be admitted, however, that more regard was had for the wishes of the more intelligent natives concerned than was conspicuous in many a European deal or exchange of territory down to recent history.

Before returning to seven years' hard work in British Central Africa, my brother paid a literary tribute to its discoverer, Livingstone, whose biography he wrote at this time. He chose as the site of his Residency the rugged and beautiful Zomba district which that explorer had revealed. It was much wilder (and therefore more interesting to Harry) than the trim and ordered civilization of the older Missionary centre at Blantyre, where in early days the secular arm had been too much identified with the spiritual. For this reason mainly he deliberately chose a political capital apart from the pre-existing religious one. It delighted him at Zomba to hear lions and leopards in the night. One of the latter he tamed, together with a number of other wild creatures. Another leopard he served up as steaks and soup at a Residency dinner party, and wrote to Mr. Sharpe that his guests found it delicious. No doubt they politely said so.

Not only against wild beasts, but to guard against raids from Yao savages, the Residency buildings had

to be adapted for easy defence. With only fifty Sikh soldiers and Captain Maguire, Harry had very soon to enter on a long period of warfare by bombarding Mponda's town in order to stop the slave trade at this point and the levying of toll on Missionary steamers. Maguire first built Fort Johnston in sections and by stealth on moonlight nights, choosing a position on the opposite bank of the Shire to Mponda's in order to establish our control over this important approach to Lake Nyasa.

With the tiny nucleus of an army, consisting of a few score Sikhs and a dozen or so picked Zanzibaris, it was only possible for my brother and his splendid Indian Staff Corps officer, Captain Cecil Maguire, to make headway against the thousands of Arab and native foes of the Protectorate by lightning marches and surprise attacks on each foe separately. This was done with repeated success over a great stretch of territory. It always resulted in the freeing of slaves, the safeguarding of Mission lives and property, and the abolition of rapacious tolls on traders and coffee planters. Two gunboats were placed by our Government on the Zambesi, but without the steamers of the Missionaries and the African Lakes Company the rapid transport of even such a tiny force as seventy men would have been impossible. One of the most troublesome and truculent of our enemies at this time was Makinjira, on Lake Nyasa, who treacherously fired on an embassy under a flag of truce. His town was bombarded, and Harry landed in command of a storming force and captured Makinjira's cannon and burnt one of his sailing ships.

The Residency at Zomba, Shire Highlands (Nyasaland) in the Years 1894 and 1895

An officer whom I subsequently met in Uganda gave me an amusing description of the impression created by my brother when, as frequently happened, he directed and led one of these many storming operations against strongly defended Arab stockades. A less military appearance than Harry's could hardly be imagined. He invariably fought in the sort of sailor's straw hat alluded to by Mr. Swann, and he never lowered his beloved white umbrella. When warned by his officers that this last made a terribly easy mark for enemy gun fire, my brother said he feared sunstroke much more than their bullets. As a matter of fact, these used to splash all round him, making the narrowest misses. But he was never hit, and his native troops, firmly believing in his invulnerability, and perhaps in the oriental inception of the umbrella as a mark of greatness, followed this quaint form of standard up to and over stockades belching with gunfire. In the maddest rushes nothing escaped the attention of the White Umbrella. On several occasions he had to intervene to save the lives of wounded and prisoners, but sometimes his clemency was abused by the treacherous Arabs. One of these, apparently disabled in a hand-to-hand fight with a Sikh soldier, was disarmed and spared at Harry's command. His Sikh opponent left him lying on the ground and joined in a final rush at the stockade. My brother was directing the charge at a little distance from the scuffle, when his quick eye remarked the Arab crawling stealthily to reach a rifle lying beside a dead soldier. In a flash Harry covered the intervening distance, just too late to prevent the man shooting the Sikh who had spared

him, but in time to put a revolver bullet through the treacherous Arab's head.

The slave traders became more and more enraged at the repeated destruction of their ships used to carry their wretched human cargo from one end of the great lake to the other, where German or Portuguese control was not yet effective. Unfortunately, the gallant Captain Maguire bore no such charmed life as his chief. In attempting to destroy two of Makinjira's slave boats, Maguire's hastily improvised gunboat stuck on a sandbank while his force of 28 men which it had landed was ambushed in the reeds by two thousand of the enemy just as they were destroying the ships. The boat which Maguire had landed in, and in which he meant to regain the steamer, had been washed from her moorings by one of those sudden storms to which the Lake is subject. The little force therefore had to swim to the stranded steamer, and Maguire, covering the retreat of his men, was the last to enter the water. He was shot through the head, and sank just as he was nearing safety.

Shortly afterwards, another British Nyasa force, under Mr. J. H. King, met with repulse, with loss of life and a gun, in attacking Zarafi's hill fort. Alarming accounts of Harry's own position were published in the English Press, under such headings as 'Shall Johnston be Deserted?' and 'Another Gordon'. A section of the missionaries and traders in Nyasaland, and anti-expansionists in England took this opportunity to attack him in print. To raise money for his tiny force, with which he had opened trade routes and prevented ten thousand slaves yearly from being shipped across

Nyasa, he had imposed import duties of 6 per cent. and some slight export duties on ivory. Yet these were objected to by a considerable minority of the lay and clerical settlers, who expected to get security for nothing. They criticized the Commissioner for not just sitting down with his troops and letting the slave trade continue. Unkindest cut of all, the Anti-Slavery people in England complained that he had himself enlisted slaves at Zanzibar, and in the middle of his fight against slavery he had to write a contradiction of the slander.

But Mr. Lowther, the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was soon able to give reassuring accounts of Nyasaland when questioned in the Commons. My brother quickly rallied round him all but a few disgruntled malcontents among the British, and together with native allies whom he had won over from hostility he soon retrieved the position.

Some of the Scottish missionaries had hoped to establish a kind of Calvinist theocracy in Nyasaland, and other settlers who had acquired land not too scrupulously from the natives were enraged at having their claims set aside or minimized by the Commissioner. There was in fact a distinct coldness between the Presbyterian missionaries and the Administration, and it was these men who took a discreditable advantage of the above recorded reverses of two of the Commissioner's subordinates to attack Harry himself in the Press as being militaristic, rash, bureaucratic, etc. Whitehall military critics carped at a civilian being in command of operations, ignoring the fact that the

only two reverses his forces ever sustained were when my brother himself was not present.

But the great bulk of the Press and public rallied enthusiastically to his support. Reinforcements from India (somewhat grudged by the Press of that country) were despatched to the number of a few hundred with excellent officers, and with these and three new gunboats the Commissioner made the country safer and more prosperous than it had ever been before.

In part payment for these results, he instituted a moderate system of taxation of the natives who benefited by the stable and humane government he set up. But here again his measures were assailed by the Scottish missionaries. Ignoring their pinprick attacks, Harry used every pause in the war to establish a judicial system and to protect the natives from exploitation at the hands of unscrupulous Europeans (some of whom claimed to have bought land at a halfpenny an acre!). He also pushed on the construction of good roads.

Very soon his successes against the slave-raiding Arabs and their native allies met with approbation and support as the full horrors of the Trade were revealed and the disparity in numbers between the Commissioner's army and the forces of the Arab-Yao confederacy was realized. My brother appealed direct to the Press, and the *Evening News* gave the following summary of what was happening:

> 'Men resisting the Arabs are tied to trees and cut in pieces, women are butchered, and children are lifted by the feet and have their brains battered out against the stone seats of the village square. When

the captives are mustered, the aged and weakly are told they are at liberty to go. When they try to avail themselves of this permission the sportive spirits of the raiders practise eccentricities of cruelty upon them, a common trick being to tie a victim by the ankles to a horse and drag him round the village at full gallop till he becomes a shapeless mass of blood and bones. The horrors of the subsequent march are quite equal to those of the capture. If hundreds of our wealthier young men would band themselves together under Johnston's leadership they would strike a noble blow for civilization.'

The *Pall Mall Gazette* reported:

'Commissioner Johnston is playing havoc with the slave raiders. Not only has he liberated hundreds of captives, but he has tried the raiders and sentenced them to terms of imprisonment. It would not have been Mr. Johnston, by the way, if he had not had "some remarkable escapes". We wonder if he carried any arms except his customary umbrella.'

But this was what was going on behind the scenes at the Foreign Office. Sir Villiers Lister wrote to Harry in May, 1892:

'I fear it will be a long time before your Customs Houses bring you in sums at all approaching those of the Niger. A duty on missionaries would be useful – Scotch ones to pay double, with an extra tax for Presbyterians in any form. We had a deputation of them here to-day, conducted by the pious Balfour of Burleigh. They came to curse you for

(1) Interfering with the government of native chiefs; (2) Oppressive taxation. Lord Salisbury stuck up for you like a man, and expressed his great sympathy for you in all the great difficulties of your position, and pointed out the absurdity of trying to govern Nyasaland from Westminster. He pointed out that high-class officials could not be got without good pay, involving taxation. He also informed them that the Slave Trade could not be put down with rose water. Upon this they praised you effusively, and retired with their tails between their legs in the custody of B. of B., who was evidently ashamed of them.'

Another influential friend wrote to him in the same month:

'I sent a copy of your book on Livingstone to Mr. Joseph Chamberlain. He gave me a very racy account of his first conversation with Cecil Rhodes. He said to him: "Why should I take an interest in you? I only know three things about you: Diamonds, Dynamite and Parnellite sympathies, and Dutch or Boer ditto." This shows the distrust of our Elizabethan friend prevalent in some quarters, from which distrust I am not altogether free. I always tell Lord Wolmer that *you* are an *Imperial Englishman* out and out, and that although your position is a most difficult one on account of the British South Africa Company you will always keep in view the Foreign Office policy, and shape everything to fulfil Lord Salisbury's views. I have ventured to go to the length of saying that you are one of those Englishmen who would put their blind eye to the telescope if you thought the necessity had arisen for it, as you do not shirk responsibility.

> Truly, your position *is* a most difficult one, rendered tenfold more so by your having to get the sinews of administration from the British South Africa Company. I think it is a disgrace to our Treasury that it should be so. I do not blame my friend, Mr. Goschen, but the *Permanent Officials* there. I can well understand the urgency for opening up the country rapidly and so raising some revenue to render you more independent of any Chartered Company. It is a false position to be placed in.'

It will thus be seen that my brother had no sooner overcome the Portuguese, the Slave Traders and the underhand opposition of ungrateful and cantankerous clerics than he found himself relentlessly opposed by his one-time friend, Cecil Rhodes, and a still more formidable (because anonymous) force of Permanent Officials. Those of the Foreign Office, however, remained friendly, while Sir Villiers Lister and Sir Percy Anderson were still there, as is evidenced by the following letter from one of them just after. Lord Salisbury had gone out of office:

> 'I am afraid the withdrawal by the South African Chartered Company of all but their covenanted allowances to you will cause you more difficulty and hamper your future operations. Anderson has written to you about the impossible letter Rhodes sent to you. Does he drink, when not engaged in empire-making?'

It will be readily seen from the foregoing that a fertile occasion for the quarrel which ended the friendship and co-operation between my brother and

Rhodes was the anomalous position Harry occupied as unpaid Administrator of Northern Rhodesia while the officials under him in that district, and the other expenses of its government were provided by Rhodes on behalf of the British South Africa Company. All the while, in Nyasaland – the original basis of the British Central Africa Protectorate, of which Northern Rhodesia was then an appanage – Harry was only under the Foreign Office, which, as has been seen, while under the administration of Lord Salisbury and Sir Percy Anderson, allowed him a very free hand. His own salary was therefore paid by the Imperial Government, and not by Rhodes or the Chartered Company. Rhodes, however, did acquire some minor financial interest in Nyasaland itself, and for a time volunteered intermittent financial aid to its Administration and my brother's struggle with the Slave Traders. By degrees, this situation gave Rhodes the idea that Harry, with whom he had hitherto treated as with an equal, could be made a subservient tool to pull his chestnuts out of the fire for him.

A meeting was arranged between the two in South Africa in 1903, and the Press was aware that much depended on their coming to an agreement. The *Pall Mall Gazette* contrasted them thus:

> 'As Imperial Commissioner for Trans-Zambezia, Mr. Johnston must be here, there and everywhere in a region about as big as Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy put together. A delightfully spick-and-span little Atlas, in fact, supporting the world of British Central Africa. Rhodes and Johnston are a curious pair – the small and elegant

and debonnair figure of Mr. Johnston, and the big and burly and rather inelegant figure of Mr. Rhodes – the inexhaustible Twin Brethren of British Africa.'

My brother found Rhodes very much changed since their last meeting. With him was one of the Nyasaland Scots with whom Harry had had most friction – a man who wrote and congratulated him on his victories against the Slave Traders at the very time when he was complaining privately to Lord Rosebery of the Commissioner's 'meddlesomeness' with the chiefs in question, his taxation of imported guns (the potential cause of all the mischief), and his other fiscal methods of disarming these brigands and financing the war against them. Rhodes was sullen, moody and sulky. Knowing my brother's horror of alcoholism, he took a sardonic pleasure in introducing him to certain South African politicians who were – in those days, all too frequently – the worse for drink. Rhodes himself appeared to be undermining his constitution and souring his formerly much more genial character by some means less easy to describe in its cause than in its results. Probably mischief was made between the two by a third party, but my brother was always convinced that the immediate cause of the permanent quarrel between himself and Rhodes was as follows:

Rhodes asked him verbally to play a part similar to that afterwards assigned to the more pliable Dr. Jameson. But the raid which Rhodes wanted my brother to make was not directly against the Boers, but at the expense of the Portuguese. That is to say,

Rhodes urged him strongly to march to the sea coast from British, through admittedly Portuguese, territory. While my brother admitted the convenience of bestowing a seaport on his land-locked province, he pointed out the immorality and illegality of an unprovoked attack on a weak and friendly state. The Portuguese had loyally carried out their Agreement with us, and their local representatives bore no grudge against my brother for having prevented Serpa Pinto from annexing Nyasaland. While it was legitimate to have raced them for the possession of a No Man's Land, the idea of seizing a seaport which for three centuries had been theirs was intolerable to Harry's sense of honour, as it would have been to that of a great part of the English people. He therefore quite definitely refused to be made a catspaw of. Rhodes then tried to bring financial pressure to bear on him by stinting his Administration of the subsidies promised, and finally withdrew them altogether from Nyasaland. It was a struggle of wills. My brother gained the victory by keeping his honour and that of Great Britain unblemished, but it was a victory for which Rhodes made him pay very dearly personally. His parting words were: 'I will smash you, Johnston, for this.'

In nothing did Rhodes and my brother contrast so much as in their writing. Harry wrote well, but tended to write too much, elaborating a theme so minutely and conscientiously in correspondence, and with so many side issues as to obscure rather than elucidate the point he was so anxious to hammer home. The term 'strong, silent man' often covers a

deal of stupidity. But there is often sound sense in economy of words. At any rate Rhodes practised it, and preached it too. After his first quarrel, he wrote to Harry in his curiously unformed, uneducated-looking hand:

'Dear Johnston:
When friends have differed, all writing does harm.
Yours,
C. J. Rhodes.'

But before they had 'differed' – in 1890 – he had sent this characteristic note:

'Dear Johnston:
I ought to write you a long letter, but I hate writing, and have no private secretary.
Yours,
C. J. Rhodes.'

The Colossus of South Africa was a good friend but a bad enemy. For merely covering him with a coat while he was sleeping, he endowed a perfect stranger with a valuable plot of land for plum culture; but if anyone crossed his will, woe betide him! His fame was now rapidly rising in England, and some British Ministers who did not admire him soon began to fear him – not the least of them being Joseph Chamberlain, who, to the misfortune of my brother, was for a long time the dispenser of Colonial appointments.

The result of Harry's meeting with Cecil Rhodes and his subsequent conferences with the Foreign Office and the Chartered Company at home was to

sever his connection entirely from the last-named and stop Rhodes's interference with him in Nyasaland. It may be remarked incidentally that his personal relations with Rhodes's brothers and with most of the officials of the Chartered Company remained friendly, including Dr. (afterwards Sir Starr) Jameson.

Not for the first time, a Liberal Government agreeably surprised my brother by taking a truly Imperial view of its obligations where he was concerned. Considering that Mr. Gladstone and Sir William Harcourt had but recently opposed the vote for the Uganda Railway, it was a relief to find Harcourt ready and willing, as Chancellor of the Exchequer to provide what a Unionist in his place had grudged – Imperial funds for Imperial purposes.

But Sir William Harcourt's rival, Lord Rosebery, was by no means so helpful. He listened to and encouraged the Scottish missionary malcontents who had been rebuked by Lord Salisbury, but who with a pertinacity worthy of a better cause seemed determined to hamper the actions of the man who was making Nyasaland safe for them. Their conduct was in marked contrast to that of missionaries of other denominations, by whom my brother was always recognized as a friend, if a candid one. He was also by descent a Scot himself, and found his best audiences and most appreciative readers in North Britain. In fact, it was because the Scottish Press published a caustic attack on the Nyasaland Presbyterian missionaries by one of themselves who had the chivalry to see that as a Government official my brother could not defend himself in public print, that the original

aggressors returned to the attack by untruthfully representing to Lord Rosebery that my brother had inspired this printed defence of his policy.

But the complete success of that policy very soon silenced the carpers for good, and was nowhere so generously appreciated as in Scotland. In preparation for his final and decisive campaign against the Arab slavers and their Negro allies, my brother went to India to recruit picked native soldiers and British officers. He stayed with the Viceroy and toured the country from east to west and north to south with the keenest interest and pleasure, and with profit to his Central African province; for he introduced into it the best Indian breeds of farm animals and poultry and many useful plants and fruit trees.

He also visited Egypt as the guest of Sir Herbert Kitchener (as he was then), and was called into consultation with him and Lord Cromer and Sir Reginald Wingate as to the best methods of opening up the Sudan.

Kitchener's method of inviting him to stay was characteristically grim in its humour. They had met previously; and it had been understood then that Harry would be his guest when he came to Egypt again. When my brother on reaching Cairo put up at an hotel, the Sirdar sent a corporal's guard to fetch the deserter, and having once captured him would not let him return to the hotel again, though, truth to tell, it was more comfortable than Kitchener's casual and austere bachelor ménage.

This was the first time that anything like a Cape-to-Cairo conference was held. Harry first enunciated

on this occasion the idea of federating our more or less contiguous East African possessions. It is surprising that this ideal, though frequently mooted, has not yet been realized at the time of writing.

But since the Germans had been permitted to snap the links he had forged by treaty between British Central and East Africa, and because he distrusted South African politicians and their native policy, my brother looked mainly to India for support, apart from the Home Government. He formed the highest possible opinion of the Indian officers whom he recruited, and he was so much a friend of the Sikh soldiers that they went through some ceremony of receiving him into their tribal and religious brotherhood when, guided by veterans of his earlier campaigns, he visited their country for the purpose of increasing his Indian legion.

With these old and new soldiers, he and Mr. Sharpe, Major Edwards, Lieutenant Edward Alston, Mr. Nicoll and others whose splendid services he has acknowledged swept the country clear in 1894, 1895 and 1896 of the last of the slave raiders and bandits infesting it. The ever-victorious little army of the Protectorate usually fell upon each enemy separately with Napoleonic strategy. My brother's method was always to get in the first blow, never to await a declared enemy. And he forced each chief to declare his disposition unequivocally. He would send him a bullet and some salt: that was all. If the salt was returned, it was peace, with the intimation that the Chief wished to 'take hold of the White Man's leg'. If the bullet came back, it brought the defiant mes-

sage 'bring me your war!' And the sender of it got what he asked for sooner and harder than he had ever expected. There was no doubt that at this stage the natives only respected force and resolution, and they bore no malice when they were bowled over. One chief, who had tried conclusions with the B.C.A. Administration and come off second best, volunteered his services as an ally in the next little war, remarking that he had had his licking and thought it was time that some of the other chiefs should have theirs.

The most recalcitrant sultans and chiefs were exiled, with maintenance, when captured, but one of them expiated his numerous murders and cruelties on the gallows. This was Mlozi, the worst of the Slavers, and the brain of their confederation. After a forced march, Harry appeared suddenly before the walls of his strongly fortified town, which, after his summons to surrender had been refused, he bombarded and carried by assault. The villain Mlozi, was found hiding under the floor of his house. Testimony was immediately taken that he had ordered the massacre of seventy hostages, and he was forthwith hanged. His brother came to Harry when it was all over, and thanked him for giving Mlozi 'such a beautiful hanging,' meaning that it was 'very well staged.' This might have referred in part to a picturesque tale current in the Press afterwards that Harry, between announcing the sentence and carrying it out, entertained Mlozi to a banquet, with champagne, and saw to it that 'ample justice' was done all round! His telegraphic report of the matter to the Government gave no unnecessary details: 'Mlozi encountered, defeated,

hanged'. It meant the end of slavery in British Central Africa.

Throughout the campaign, the most devastating enemy of the Commissioner's army was the Anopheles mosquito, the deadly carrier of Malarial and Black Water Fever. It took a far heavier toll of European lives during these Arab and Yao wars than battle or assassination. To surprise Mlozi's fortress it was necessary to march light, so Harry had no tent to shield him from the drenching tropical rain. In consequence, he developed one of his worst attacks of Black Water Fever. This assails its victims as suddenly as though they had been poisoned, and in a few days they are either convalescent or dead. Being medically warned that a further spell of tropical Africa would prove fatal to his power for work, he returned to England in 1896, leaving a prosperous, peaceful, well-ordered and economically run British possession where he had found a wretched, ravished No-Man's-Land.

He completed his services to British Central Africa by making it the title and subject of a vivid, exhaustive and beautifully illustrated book, published in 1897, and by his subsequent interest in the much-needed railway built to connect Nyasaland with the coast.

Before he reached home in 1896 he was gazetted a Knight of the Bath, and was at the time the youngest of that or of any other British Order. It is pleasant to record that his father, who had followed each step in his career with pride, advice, affection and sympathy, was among the first to congratulate him, though when Harry was on his way homeward he was saddened by the news of his death.

Approach to a Chief's Hut Decorated with Human Heads

From a drawing by Sir Harry Johnston, reproduced by permission of the Illustrated Newspapers, Ltd.

Another grievous loss which he sustained at this time was in the sudden death of his old sponsor, friend and mentor, Sir Percy Anderson, Permanent Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and previously to that, head of the African Department of the Foreign Office. He insured continuity in our Egyptian policy, and inspired the clear and bold declaration of it to France, for which Lord Rosebery – a mere mouthpiece – got the credit, and rightly so, since if the advice he took had proved wrong he would have had to have taken the blame. Few realize, beneath the cloak of 'Representative' Government (still largely a sham, in default of the Referendum and Proportional Representation) how largely we are governed by a skilfully disguised Bureaucracy, depending for its success on the education and personal character of an Upper Ten whose very names are unknown to the man in the street. It was against the intermittent abuses, the partly inevitable but at times growing imperfections of this impersonally personal direction of our affairs that my brother directed the least fruitful of his energies during his later years. Whether he may be judged right or wrong, he was at least far better informed on the subject than it is possible for the general public to be.

While at home in the summer of 1896, he became engaged to Sir Percy's step-daughter, the Hon. Winifred Irby, a sister of Lord Boston, and they were married in October of the same year.

CHAPTER VII

It was generally assumed by the Press and public in 1896 that my brother would be the next High Commissioner in South Africa. After the Jameson Raid our increasing tension with the Boers loomed large in the public mind. Rhodes was for the moment in disgrace with all parties, and they all presented my brother's policy and methods as an antithesis to his.

'Go to Sir Harry Johnston,' said Mr. (Lord) Morley at Arbroath 'if you would learn how to civilize, control and govern in South Africa'. Very naturally, Rhodes's dislike for his former friend was intensified when he was presented as a model and in contrast to himself.

At the end of 1896, owing to the reaction against the Boers due to the Kaiser's telegram and its intensification of Kruger's obduracy, Rhodes's popularity and power revived. But Lord Salisbury himself proposed sending my brother to South Africa as High Commissioner. The London Press named him and Sir Alfred Milner as the two men 'in the running'. But Joseph Chamberlain silently but strenuously opposed the Premier's nominee, and it was believed by those 'in the know' that he did so at the suggestion of Cecil Rhodes. So Sir Alfred Milner was entrusted with the destinies of South Africa during the critical time which led up to the Boer War. Lord Salisbury admitted to my brother that he had been overruled in the matter. He was no less friendly than hitherto, but he was

growing old and weary of politics, and had no mind to oppose his popular ally, Joseph Chamberlain, in the latter's own Department, the Colonial Office.

On the other hand, as Lord Salisbury was still Premier, and as his Private Secretary, Sir Eric Barrington, had assured my brother, in confidence, that he would certainly succeed Lord Loch as High Commissioner of South Africa, Harry had reason to feel disappointed and embittered at being set aside without the consolation of any equivalent post being offered him. With more knowledge of what had gone before than that possessed by the Opposition Press, he shared its opinion that Rhodes had been the real arbiter in this matter.

Nothing however, could spoil the happiness of his marriage and the honeymoon spent in Italy. Finding the Italian Lake Country too wet in October, he and Lady Johnston went on to Rome. He had some business to transact with the Vatican respecting the affairs of Catholic Missions working in Central Africa. His relations with these had always been satisfactory – so much so, that they figure very little in his letters or reports. He praised the Jesuits and White Fathers for the very practical education they gave to their neophytes, and their services to African agriculture by the introduction and cultivation of useful plants and animals. They also gave him the minimum of anxiety as to their own safety. On Tanganyika they had taken the precaution of arming their converts, so that when the Arab War came they were able to hold their own. But my brother exerted himself on their behalf with some of the leading Arabs, and their medical work

commended them even to those who had no mind to give ear to their teaching.

Cardinal Ledochovski, head of the Propaganda, with whom my brother transacted his business, got him permission to sketch and paint in the Vatican precincts and gardens. Once, when he was so engaged, Leo XIII got out of his carriage and came up to look at what he was doing.

In May, 1897, Lord Salisbury offered Harry the quasi-Diplomatic post of Consul-General in Tunis, with the intimation that as this – in all other ways pleasant – position was less well paid than his last post, his Pension should be calculated from the level of the latter. Since his first visit to that country eighteen years previously as a simple artist, Tunis had become a French Egypt, with the polite fiction of a native ruler – the Bey – but a real, and most benevolent, despot in the French Resident, M. Millet. But Consular representatives of the different Powers were still accredited to the Court of the Bey. The French were preparing to draw still tighter their political and fiscal hold over the Regency, as it was called, and Lord Salisbury, on account of my brother's previous knowledge of the country, and in order that he might recoup his health in a congenial climate, selected him for the somewhat ungrateful task of negotiating a reduction of our status in Tunis in exchange for a more complacent French attitude towards us in Egypt. It will be remembered that my brother had got on very well with the French when they were beginning their invasion of the country, and he understood the French mentality remarkably well. In pre-Entente

days it required a blend of great firmness and suavity to bargain with France, whose Press had been bitter with us over the Jameson Raid and the inevitable clash between the extending empires of the two nations from Morocco to the Congo and from Dahome to Abyssinia.

Harry was much less inclined for the *rôle* of making graceful concessions in North Africa than for that of a unifier in the South. But he recognized that Rhodes had been successful in blocking his way to the latter, and the artist in him, remembering the Saracenic solace of Tunis, found some balm there, though it never salved his burning ambition to serve the Empire with all his restless energy. It is idle to speculate whether if he had held Lord Milner's post, ensuing events in South Africa would have taken any different course. He was strongly opposed to the reactionary and separatist policy of the more extreme Boers, and especially to their attitude towards negroes and Indians, but he could not absolve all the British South Africans from the same false conception of empire and the white man's responsibilities. At the same time he saw that the white man's position in the sub-continent would ultimately become precarious and perhaps untenable unless a fusion of interests between British and Dutch on a national basis took place within that most elastic of leagues, the British Empire. Wars are mainly made or saved by things said and done, or left unsaid and undone, many years in advance, and when Harry set foot in Tunis for the second time there were only two more years of grace before the opposite extreme of Africa was set ablaze. When the Peace finally came,

he was a strong supporter of Campbell Bannerman's splendidly vindicated policy of confidence and conciliation.

A less ambitious man than Harry would have been content to end his active life in Tunis, but though he strove to make it so, it was just because life was not active enough that he conceived himself as languishing in exile. He enjoyed, however, in this healthy climate, the companionship and co-operation of a wife fitted by temperament, upbringing and heredity to supplying those social gifts, that guarded intercourse in Diplomatic circles and the control of a large household which the Consulate-General in Tunis entailed.

He went to take possession of two vast Consular residences, one in the town of Tunis, whose surroundings I have already described in Chapter II, and the other – a former palace of the Beys – at La Marsa, on the site of ancient Carthage. The latter had a garden-park and farm of more than thirty acres attached, with a little railway station of its own on the line connecting it with Tunis, thirteen miles distant. Harry decided to live entirely in the country house, and use the town one as an office and the headquarters of his principal Vice-Consul, Mr. Gerald Lascelles, a son of our former ambassador who played such a great part in Berlin in striving to abate Anglo-German acerbity. Both houses were in a state of considerable neglect. Harry's predecessor, Mr. Haggard – a brother of Sir Rider – had departed hastily, to become British Minister in Venezuela. In any case, the old Moorish palace at La Marsa and its grounds required a lot of money

to keep up properly – more than was allowed for in the out-of-date Consular emoluments.

At this time I joined my brother as his Secretary. It required some linguistic leanings, we soon found, to live and entertain in the Marsa Consulate General, where only the groom was English among the staff, the rest being Arab, negroid, Italian, Maltese and German. The beautiful Sicilian housemaid who called one in the morning had a not unpleasing custom of searching for the hand of the sleeper and implanting on it a fervent kiss. Mr. E. A. W. Clarke, one of Harry's Foreign Office friends, was completely put out of countenance by her matitudinal good manners. We could not but be amused at this, for Mr. Clarke was so very much of a cynic and somewhat *blasé* man of the world as to have recently evoked my brother's comic muse in the following strain:

When Clarke was but a little boy
He'd sense beyond his years.
He'd argue with his monthly nurse
On *his* exemption from the curse
Which fell on Adam, and coerce
That worthy dame to tears.
Later, he said 'A man of seven
Must not remain unwed'.
He offered marriage to the cook
(A woman of forbidding look),
But she refused him, so he took
To literature instead.
At twenty-one he'd reached and passed
The goal of his desire,
So said to Granville 'Never mind,
Give me a post where I can find

It easy to retire.
So he became a Foreign Office
Residential Clerk:
A post with many pleasant 'perks',
But one wherein he never shirks
His duty, for he often works
Long after dark
Does Edward Ashley Walrond Clarke.

The same domestic Juno who overcame Mr. Clarke's ingrained cynicism was equally successful against that of my brother. When he had hurt his eye in falling from his bicycle, she lit two candles before a picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, and made him sit facing it, which he did quite meekly, while she said Aves for deliverance from blindness, to which it is possible she attached a double significance.

Though a professed Agnostic, he was wont to apostrophize his Maker very loudly when hurt or annoyed, and had done so on the occasion of this accident. Muhammad, his very splendid-looking Arab janissary, who was zealous in acquiring colloquial English, was heard for days afterwards repeating to himself 'My God, my eye!' and thereafter brought out the phrase with honest pride, but no apparent relevance.

As there was much entertaining to be done, the most important of the servants was Luigi, the Sicilian cook. On the occasion of the last Birthday celebration in Queen Victoria's reign Luigi acquitted himself magnificently, until some underling allowed the salt packing to become incorporated with the ice pudding. The diplomacy of Harry's Diplomatic guests was severely tested when they took their first mouthful of

brine, and their wry faces were no doubt reported gleefully by the waiters to Luigi, who, like all true artists, was sensitive to public appreciation of his work. His artistic temperament, fortified by a quantity of his cooking brandy, impelled him, revolver in hand, to seek out the author of the mischief. He pursued him, or her, through the labyrinthine ways of the rambling old Arab palace. We caught echoes of the chase as we sat conversing with our Diplomatic guests when coffee and liqueurs had banished memories of the nauseous ice. By wonderful good luck, my brother had just escorted his last departing guest and seen him off at the marble steps of the vestibule when up to the head of these steps there surged a crowd which in these days would be considered priceless for a cinema. The whole of our domestic staff came rushing before and around the maddened Luigi, who was brandishing his revolver while the Negroes, Arabs, Maltese and Italians ducked, dodged, grabbed, wailed, shrieked and shouted. In a flash, Harry sprang upon his maddened cook, jerked the revolver out of his hand, and grappled with him. But the impetus of the crowd swept them both off their feet and sent them rolling over and over each other, still at grips, from top to bottom of the steps. My brother remained uppermost at the bottom, but Luigi's wife entered the fray and pulled the victor's disordered hair and the braided lapel of his official uniform. When the combatants had been picked up and disentangled, Mr. Luigi was locked up and Mrs. Luigi was locked out for the night, after which the crumpled Consul General went to bed. When, next morning, he sat to try his erring

cook, everyone had had time to view things in the perspective of the future. Harry remembered that Luigi was the best cook, *qua* cook, in Tunis, and Luigi was pleasantly aware of that opinion. Mrs. Luigi came in beaming with her mate, exclaiming ecstatically *'Perdono!* I have but come to assure Your Excellency that all Tunis talks of the magnificence and superlative success of last night's banquet. May we long be honoured by serving such a master!' Remembering that there were other 'banquets' in the near future, my brother decided to keep Luigi, but deprived of his revolver.

In recalling such small things which make up so much more of a man's life and character than big events, I remember an equally comic scene in which Harry figured with his negroid butler, named Ali. Though a nominal follower of the Prophet, Ali could not resist his master's luscious dessert wine, golden Muscatel, and when this was locked up, he took to methylated spirits and brown sugar. The only drink he was afraid of was ginger-beer. Harry retained till the end of his life a schoolboyish love for this peculiarly British and gaseous liquid, and had it made for him in whatever part of the world he chanced to be. Properly iced, it was certainly a refreshing drink during late summer in Tunis, when the temperature sometimes rose to 115 degrees in the shade. On one occasion the heat caused the newly-fermented ginger-beer to rise with alarming suddenness, and squirt on to the necks of guests like hairwash in the barber's shop when Ali put his thumb in place of the cork. Harry jumped up angrily and flicked his panic-struck

butler with his napkin. But it was plain that the man's real source of fear was the Djinn, which, unconscious of punning, he exclaimed was in the ginger-beer, and he ran round wildly, distributing a cooling douche over all. I had always imagined the imprisoned Djinn of the Arabian Nights Fisherman to have been confined in a Stone's ginger-beer bottle.

There was quite a farm attached to the Marsa Consulate General. The first livestock my brother bought on arrival were three or four horses. He considered them cheap. They were certainly nasty. His own was a magnificent-looking black steed – a pure Arab, I imagine. He went like the wind, like a hurricane, and was no more amenable to control, such was the hardness of his mouth and the nastiness of his temper. He had a trick of suddenly dashing under low-hanging olive branches – by no means a peaceful sign to him. It was only Harry's shortness of stature and determined grip of things which saved his head being knocked off on several occasions. He was also a decidedly good horseman. Our Barb horses had a most abominable trot, owing to their having been hobbled when young; but they galloped magnificently. The Plain of Carthage on which we were situated looked just the place for a good gallop. But it wasn't. There were numerous wells, either in use or in ruins, whose uncovered mouths were entirely masked at a little distance by a growth of low scrub. Again and again we reined our horses up sharp on their haunches on the very brink of these pitfalls. Then there was the jerboa, that pretty but pestiferous squirrel-rat with legs like a miniature kangaroo and the same leaping habits,

which tunnelled the earth widely just beneath the surface, causing a horse and its rider to come an awful crash on what looked like safe and solid ground.

Finally, there was the dead city of Carthage – or three cities in layers, the latest and top one being only just underground. The Berbers keep their live-stock penned up at night in buried Byzantine houses, whose roofs may crumble and cave in sometimes without the slightest notice. I was sitting one day in the gardens of the Marsa Consulate, watching an Arab gardener irrigate the beds with running water drawn from a raised well head by a blindfolded camel, when suddenly I saw the man sink into the ground and disappear. On running up I found a newly-opened hole into black darkness, and heard a muffled voice calling up from the pit. The man was hoisted to the surface by a rope. He had only been slightly shaken and bruised in falling into a buried house, from which he brought up a perfect Roman lamp and a handful of gold and silver Byzantine coins.

The work of excavating Carthage was in the hands of the White Fathers, whose Cathedral of St. Louis, built on the summit of the hill Citadel, looked very like a mosque. Its founder, Cardinal Lavigerie, believed in being all things to all men, so his missionary priests were not only bearded, but bournoused like Berbers. We were to meet again in far off Uganda some of these men who had come to Carthage for their preliminary training.

We were told that shortly before our arrival in Tunis, the then Archbishop of Canterbury visited Carthage, and wished to enter into conversation with

the White Fathers regarding events in the life of St. Augustine of Hippo, whose *Confessions* throw such an interesting light on the thriving Latin Christianity of Fourth Century Tunis. The White Fathers of that province spoke no English. The Archbishop's French was that of an earlier Eton; so he tried them in Latin. But his Latin was also of Eton and the insular England of those days, with a pronunciation incomprehensible to the rest of the world. So the learned Primate's words of wisdom were never understood by the White Fathers, and he left Carthage sadly, with the conviction that whatever views its custodians did hold about St. Augustine they were sure to be wrong!

My brother's other neighbours within a drive of the Consulate General were, firstly, the French Resident, M. René Millet. The Millets were relations of the Bellocs, and had Irish blood in them. They were much more friendly to us than the Military caste, which at that time was intensely anti-British.

Then we were within a walk of the Bardo, the residence of the Bey of Tunis, an amiable cypher in the hands of the French. Some other Arab princes spent the summer at any rate on their farms in this neighbourhood, which was breezy, and lay between the open sea and a salt lake. We naturally saw very little of the local Moorish aristocracy, and nothing at all of their womenkind, whom custom obliged in those days to go about not only heavily veiled, but in closed carriages with drawn blue blinds. It was already becoming the fashion for upper class Muhammadans to be nominally monogamous in Tunis, but here and there were to be found Arab gentlemen with several

official wives. Most of them talked and read French as well as Arabic, and some affected English tastes. Of one of these Harry was told the following story:

Prince —— advertised for an English governess-companion to educate and amuse the ladies of his harem. A girl, straight from Girton, came out with great ideas about the emancipation of the East, softened by the supposed romance adhering to Arab sheiks and harem life. On arrival, she was agreeably impressed by their culture and kindness. She grew expert in the handling of coloured rice without a knife and fork, and tried to appreciate the delicacy of camel's hump served with garlic, spice, oranges, dates and thistles. Fancy needlework, gossip and petty jealousies were her main trials, but rival wives would speak of each other with dignity as 'my colleague in marriage'. French scepticism was curiously blended in the harem with ancient superstitions about the evil eye, against which Fatema's hand was worn as a potent charm. There seemed to be no end to the number of women employed in the labyrinth of chambers inclosing with their cloister-like colonnades some beautiful flowering patios, or descending into the gloom of Moorish kitchens with charcoal braziers and monstrous Moorish oil jars of the sort that pickled Ali Baba's Forty Thieves.

Certain of the women made no secret of the fact that they had been bought from some Jewish couple who posed as their parents, but who were merely go-betweens for the journey to Tunis from Turkey, Egypt or Tripoli. Slavery of this carefully veiled kind often meant the selection of the fittest for a specific purpose,

and there were many girls who preferred it to the socially lower status of paid domestic service.

At any rate, they seemed to the serious English girl a very happy crowd, until the morning of her first Thursday in the harem. Then she was awakened by a horrible hubbub. Looking out of her window on to an inclosed patio court yard, she saw the entire female staff of the harem rushing round in a circle while a black eunuch in the middle flicked them with a long whip. Two of the three rival wives were there, their fingers and toes rosy with henna, and their flying locks flushed with that favourite Tunisian dye. There were squawking maids of golden-brown skin colour, and one or two quite black who may have come from Abyssinia, still an export centre for slaves to the Muhammadan marts.

Duly horrified, the Girton graduate asked to see the Prince. He received her with charming courtesy, and was gravely surprised at her complaint of the 'cruelty' she had witnessed. Reminding her that she had been allowed to practise her own religion in his household, he stipulated that she should not interfere with his, and told her that the Koran enjoined on men the duty of beating their wives. He for his part could not be bothered to judge the daily disputes and accusations of the harem. So at the end of the Moslem week he enjoined on all a general penance, possibly graded by the black eunuch who dispensed it to the weekly total naughtiness of each one. The Girton girl returned to England without having emancipated the East.

A far grimmer past was revealed in the precincts of the old harem quarters of the one-time Beylical palace

which was our home at La Marsa. Just beneath the barred windows of one of the rooms which I occupied was a well which for a long time had not been used. During the summer of our second year in Tunis, when Harry wished to supplement his usual supply, he put this old well in order and directed it should be made use of. The first bucket that came up contained, floating in the water, the scalp of a young woman, with thick tresses of black hair still attached.

After this, the well was only used to irrigate Harry's precariously sustained croquet lawn. He made croquet the vogue in Tunis, but it was pleasanter to play against him than with him, so much did he give himself to the excitement of the game. I have only met two other men who matched him in unconscious intimidation at games. One was my schoolmaster, and the other was Mr. H. G. Wells, in directing the manœuvres of his guests at Sunday hockey.

A more peaceful recreation of my brother, wherever he lived, was an aviary. At La Marsa he employed Arabs to bring him in every live bird they could snare. Lady Johnston is one of those people who have a talent for taming birds, and many of them would perch on her outstretched hand. Harry had a female baboon called Dinduna. She comported herself in a most ladylike manner when she went out driving with him, dressed as a little girl, but gave herself up to transports of jealousy when any other pet was noticed. Doves who thought she was a benign human being and came up to feed near her, suddenly had their heads pulled off. Before she found her last home and a devoted husband in the London Zoo, she became very

useful in entertaining our guests, who, by their numbers and diversity made Sunday for us anything but a day of rest.

Harry was the reverse of sociable. He liked a few people of his own choosing and tastes, and abominated crowds, banquets, small talk and conventional callers. Accordingly, on Sunday afternoons at La Marsa he would shut himself up in his studio and paint pictures for the *Graphic* or for exhibition at the Academy, leaving the rest of us to cope with a monstrous regiment of callers whose one common impulse was to 'fall out' among themselves; for they were of the most diverse nationalities, languages, religions and social status.

By far the most numerous of the British subjects in Tunis who paid their duty call on Sundays, during a three-hours' interval between trains from and to Tunis, were the industrious and prosperous Maltese – lawyers, doctors, merchants, etc. It was interesting to notice among them occasional fair types, a relic of Northern Crusading ancestry grafted on to a Phoenician stock. Most of our Vice-Consuls in Tunis were Maltese.

My brother was happiest when he could be least 'official', with such charming people as the Anglo-Italian family of Count Raffo, famous for their good looks, wit and beautiful speaking voices, and the equally charming family of his Austrian colleague, the Baron Pereira von Arnstein. With these friends it was delightful to picnic among orange groves in the folds of yellow sand dunes, by the bluest of blue seas, or in the fragrant pine woods in the highlands of Hammam Lif, where the cyclamens starred the ground. Yetta

Pereira shared Harry's enthusiasm for painting the gorgeously dressed crowds of unspoilt Kaiwan, the sacred city of pilgrims in the steppes bordering the Sahara.

But the call of the wild which Mr. Robert Hichens has depicted as vividly as the country itself in 'The Garden of Allah' drove my brother into the desert and the strange countries on the borders of it. Beginning with a visit to Tripoli, still slumbering under Turkish misrule, he traversed the whole of the interior and the south of Tunisia bordering on the Sahara. He landed on the fascinating island of Djerba, which he maintained was the original classical site of the land of the Lotus Eaters. Hereabouts one is indeed in the land of legend and of pre-historic records graven in stone. On the Matmata Plateau he found a Berber race of troglodytes living in every type of cave-dwelling, from the scarcely-altered natural cavern to spacious vaults elaborately carved and sometimes entirely artificial. This last would consist of a patio court-yard cut deeply into the limestone soil, open to the sky, but reached by a sloping tunnel lofty enough to admit the passage of a ladened camel. All round the sunk court-yard would be doorways opening into artificially made cave rooms, whitewashed, and lit with oil lamps, clean, dry, and a harbour of refuge alike from this nearly rainless plateau's glare and heat by day and sharp cold by night. He found Dwirat to be the most extraordinary patchwork town – Phoenician, Roman, Saracenic. It was the terminus for caravans from Timbuktu and other places across the Sahara. The Sudanese languages were as much spoken here as Arabic or Berber dialects.

From Dwirat he rode across the Regency, over desert and plateau, to Tebessa in Algeria. As he rode north-westwards on to more elevated country, the scenery lost its sterility and forests appeared. Here there were so many and such well preserved ruins and so few living inhabitants that it was like visiting the glorious past of North Africa on Mr. Wells's Time Machine.

A nomad life always suited Harry's health. He thoroughly enjoyed squatting in Arab tents and eating kuskus (lamb, rice, almonds and raisins) after a hard day's ride. These people spoke their minds to him freely. They acknowledged the benefits bestowed on their country by French rule, particularly the priceless gift of water in many parts where none had been available since the great Roman aqueducts had fallen into disuse and the barbarous Arabs had destroyed the protective mantle of forest which till their invasion had preserved the rainfall and soil fertility of North Africa. My brother used to ponder the reasons why the Egyptians, who have received equal benefits from British rule, are so much more ungrateful towards us than the Moors and Berbers are to the French, who nevertheless leave them far less independence than we have conceded to Egypt. He did not consider that races who had ruined North Africa by drought, oppression and corruption had any right to independence. But British interests came first with him, and when, at the Fashoda crisis in 1898, sheiks and Senusi came to him by night and swore that if we landed an army from Malta they would help us sweep the French into the sea, he drew up an elaborate plan of campaign with

them and took it to Malta, where it received the approval of the Naval and Military authorities. It was in the south of Tunis, in which the Senusi were strongest, where disaffection towards the French lingered longest. This was the headquarters of the fanatical sect known as the Aissawia. They were particularly anti-Christian, though their name means 'Followers of Jesus', implying the Muhammadan conception of Christ as a great wonder-working Prophet. As a special mark of favour to my brother, they condescended to give a most extraordinary demonstration of their hypnotic – I had almost written occult – powers before a large audience of guests at the La Marsa Consulate General.

There was a very long, raised marble verandah from which we could view from a safe height the wild and weird ecstasy of these fanatics in the quadrangle below. From this verandah five doors led inwards to the drawing-room, so that the ladies could retreat hurriedly if, as the leader of the band warned Harry, his forty-six followers seemed likely to run amok. There were about a hundred and fifty of us watching this demonstration of the Aissawia, and our individual impressions of it certainly tallied pretty closely, allowing for the fact that different people's attention was sometimes directed to different performers, if I may use such a word for what was professedly a religious exercise. As a star turn it would have eclipsed anything in London, though I doubt if it would have been allowed there.

The Aissawia first worked themselves into a frenzy by prolonged, hypnotic drumming and chanting.

Then they did all manner of wild, unnatural things within full view of us. Some of them chewed up bits of glass and live scorpions. (There was no doubt about their being alive, for I saw them wriggling, and bending their wicked tails to sting.) The man who was revered as the great saint of the party stripped himself almost completely naked and ran a sword repeatedly through the fleshy part of his arms and into other parts of his body, so that the blood ran, though not, if I remember rightly, as much as I should have expected it to do. Then he ran pointed skewers through his cheeks, ears, nose and neck. From the expression of his face, he seemed to be in a trance. He and his men gave one a pretty good idea of the priests of Baal, though they invoked continually in Arabic the name of Jesus. The Fakir who had skewered himself then took a lighted torch and slowly let the flames play over his body. It looked horrible, because one thought it must burn.

But even this performance was eclipsed in sensation by Harry's usually most staid and meek Arab butler becoming suddenly infected with the fanaticism of this sect, of which, it transpired, he was a secret member. He flung a tray of wine and ices on the marble floor, leapt over the marble balustrade surrounding the balcony overlooking the quadrangle, and ran full tilt to a hedge of the prickly pear cactus, the spiny fruits and foliage of which he began to gnaw. Next day he returned in his right mind, and, what was truly astonishing, without injury to his skin from the cactus prickles, which are extremely inflammatory to any mouth but that of a camel. But it

was precisely a camel which this man had imagined himself to be at the time. It was a striking illustration of how suggestion, if sufficiently intense, can arm the body as well as the mind against injury.

Apparently, in these states the conscious mind is partly or entirely submerged. Shortly after this event, the black-bearded leader of this band of zealots, possessed by some diabolic delusion, killed and partly devoured his own little daughter when she ran to meet him, though in normal life he was devoted to her. I believe the French authorities then took measures against the sect, which it likewise suspected of sedition.

My brother continued to maintain very friendly personal relations with M. Millet, the French Resident, all through the bitter Fashoda controversy. They even came to an understanding to safeguard each other's property in Tunis, whoever might remain there as representing the victor. Millet was fully persuaded that if the British did land an army from Malta it would be impossible to hold Tunis against them. He knew quite well (what, as a matter of fact, was already arranged in Malta) that Harry, after withdrawing to that island, would be asked to accompany its Expeditionary Force. A strong British fleet had already cut off a French squadron from retreat northwards, and would, a few hours after declaration of war, have given it the disagreeable alternative of an unequal fight in the open or a possibly still more disastrous blockade in the land-locked harbour of Bizerta. When we visited this much overrated harbour, it struck us, for all its boasted forts, as a worse trap for the French than Santiago had been

for the gallant fleet of Spain in the year preceding the Fashoda Crisis.

My brother's last year in Tunis – ending in the summer of 1899 – saw the beginning of friendlier relations with France. A great aid to good feeling between the two nations in Tunis was the visit of Queen Alexandra (still for a few months more Princess of Wales) and her daughters – the future Queen of Norway (then Crown Princess), and Princess Victoria. They came on the *Osborne,* after sending a long cypher telegram to Harry asking him to meet them.

After seeing the Bazaars of Tunis under his guidance, they came on to lunch at La Marsa, bringing with them Lady Knowles, General Sir Stanley Clarke, and a Naval attaché. There was a friendliness and spontaneity in all they said and did which was really charming. Queen Alexandra seemed to have followed my brother's career very closely, with sympathy and admiration. She seemed to us to be quite as young as her own daughters, who called her Alex. Her conversation, with Harry especially, was considerably more impulsive than theirs. I retain in my memory three scraps of it very clearly. One was her anxiety that Harry should go to Copenhagen with letters of introduction to her family there, so that he might visit the birth place of Hans Christian Andersen and write his Life, as he had written Livingstone's. She talked with great love of her reduced little Denmark, and immediately afterwards alluded to the Kaiser William as 'that awful Emperor'. Perhaps it was her feelings as a daughter of Denmark, outraged by the loss of

Schlesvig-Holstein, as much as her apprehensions for England's threatened sea supremacy which roused Queen Alexandra to say out loud what we now know King Edward was already thinking of the Emperor of Germany. We certainly gathered from her conversation on the eve of the Boer War that there was a very deep estrangement between the Royal Families of England and Germany.

A few days after the return of Queen Alexandra to England, Harry was offered the post of Special Commissioner and Commander-in-Chief of the Uganda Protectorate, with a salary of £2,800 and a Secretarial Allowance of £500. He had just completed and published his useful *History of the Colonization of Africa by Alien Races* (Cambridge University Press), and was longing to exercise his administrative talents again – to make history as well as write it. So, regretting only the enforced separation from his wife which it would entail, he made up his mind to say goodbye to Tunis. When we left it, the Plain of Carthage, which in spring had been starred with crimson gladioli, yellow oxalis, multi-coloured anemones and the classic asphodel, was already tawny with ripe corn. Hundreds of blue robed Berber women, with scarlet mantillas and glistening brown arms, were reaping and binding the sheaves where once was the world's greatest city. Will London look as beautiful when dead?

CHAPTER VIII

In September, 1899, my brother sailed for East Africa, taking with him, besides myself, a naturalist (Mr. Doggett) engaged in England, Mr. Vale, whom he had brought from Tunis to superintend our transport, and a fair-skinned Tunisian Spahi called Bu Natuf. We travelled on a French boat, where we got the best cooking and were allowed to work quietly in a state cabin, without being pressed to kill valuable time on the almost compulsory sports inseparable from life on an English liner. Harry was not 'sporting' in the conventional sense, caring nothing for dancing, racing, games or sweepstakes. Thereby he saved much time for more useful pursuits, but possibly lost something in human contact with his fellows. There was always a certain aloofness in his relations with the generality of his subordinates, excepting only such few of them as had either his rather exceptional scientific tastes, or else a nice sense of humour. He inspired admiration, respect and loyalty rather than liking, and bid for confidence, but very rarely confidences. He had no ambition to be voted a 'good sport', yet he could be quite sportive, if not sporting, at times. When we crossed the Line on this voyage he dressed up as a baboon, and, aided by the delighted French sailors, thoroughly 'salted' most of the passengers.

We had called at what is surely the hottest place in the world – Djibutil, the French port of Abyssinia,

with which it is connected by a railway. Here one seemed to walk in flames. There was no coolness even at dawn in this narrow end of a sea funnel where the Red Sea meets the Gulf of Aden, and the Abyssinian mountains rise bare and sheer, like the sides of an oven. Vociferating Somalis, looking singularly like devils in hell, darted round us in the fierce glare, urging all manner of discreditable adventures. Harry engaged a very good butler from amongst them, however, and a small boy – jet black, but with a European cast of features, like all the others, and quite naked, who, seizing him by the hand, pleaded unceasingly to be taken, and was engaged simply because he was amusing.

At Zanzibar the rest of the servants and porters were recruited under Harry's faithful old head man of Kilimanjaro and Nyasaland days, Sergeant-Major Ali Kiongwe, who wept with joy to see him again. (I must interpolate here that my brother had the faculty of inspiring feelings akin to love among his black dependents. They felt that they were understood and considered by him without being in the least spoilt.) Some of the minor white officials in Uganda resented the confidence which Harry put in Ali Kiongwe, not knowing perhaps that in Nyasaland this astute Swahili has accomplished valuable diplomatic work with the Arabs. As an intelligence officer he was priceless. But when he reported the smuggling by Europeans through the Customs of ivory illegally obtained and exported, he was called the Special Commissioner's spy. When both my brother and Kiongwe had retired from active life they ex-

changed letters about once a year in Swahili, and Ali Kiongwe's well earned Government Pension was supplemented by his old master, who never forgot unstinted service on the part of either black men or white. Incidentally, I may remark that some white officials who thought he did not urge their own claims for recognition and preferment with sufficient emphasis and insistence would have been surprised if they had known all that I did of the battles that he fought on their behalf with a hostile officialdom.

And there can be no doubt about it that Permanent Officialdom at the Foreign Office was from this time forward definitely hostile to him. Lord Salisbury retired soon after sending him to report on and reverse their blunders in Uganda – for that was the *raison d'être* of my brother's Special Commissionership. Lord Lansdowne, though just as friendly to him as Lord Salisbury, was no match for the Permanent Officials. Something very like bad faith was shown after only a few months by the withdrawal of monetary allowances for my brother's personal staff and transport, which had been verbally agreed to before he left for England.

At Zanzibar we had an audience with the Sultan, a very dignified old man, after the conventional representations of Abraham, with a white skin and a long white beard. He bore no signs of suffering from Abraham's conjugal jars, though he was said to have upwards of seventy wives and concubines. Perhaps there was safety in numbers. There seemed, however, to have been an unfortunate concurrence in the choice of his wedding presents; for his palace was an asylum

for countless German cuckoo clocks, all quite mad as regards time, and breaking into our polite conversation by their fussily mendacious statements.

It was still necessary in those days to recruit porters in Zanzibar for the fifteen-mile-a-day marches in the East African hinterland. So our stay was prolonged at the British Residency in this beautiful island of cloves and cocoanuts.

There followed an official reception at the port of Mombasa, where the Europeans still paid calls in miniature trolly cars, pushed by their black servants on narrow-gauge rails. The leading topic of conversations was the latest piece of daring on the part of leopards, which nightly swam across the strait separating Mombasa Island from the mainland.

But we soon found that the lion furnished the best conversational opening. The Uganda Railway in those days had only reached the Voi River, which flows from the snows of Kilimanjaro. Eighty Indian labourers had been devoured here in the few months preceding the march of our *safari* from Rail Head. An English engine driver had been pulled out of bed by one man-eater, which, having made a meal of him just outside the tent, returned to drink out of his ready-filled sitz bath before the eyes of a terrified black woman, who did not appear to tempt the lion's appetite. These almost nightly tragedies were relieved by a comedy a few days before we reached the Voi River. A wooden trap, well baited, was set for a black-maned lion which had acquired a more than usually sinister reputation, and he was duly caught. A party of Indian police was told off to shoot the

caged beast. But when they were bringing their rifles to the ready it sprang at the wooden bars so menacingly that in their panic the shikaris merely shot away these, and let the lion loose again, uninjured.

I rather think it was this same beast which Mr. Ryall of the Uganda Railway was planning to shoot when we dined with him at Voi. Returning to our tents in the dark after hearing a number of such topical stories, it was difficult to resist a nervous impulse to look back over one's shoulders. A few days after we parted from Mr. Ryall we learnt that he had himself fallen a victim to the lion he had been so eager to shoot. There were several differing accounts current at the time as to how this happened, but, if I remember rightly, the one that sounded the most convincing to us was as follows: He was apparently sleeping with two other sportsmen in a railway carriage on a siding, preparatory to sallying out to hunt for the lion at dawn. While it was still dark, the beast got in through an open window, walked over a man sleeping on the floor, and chased Ryall down the corridor. Ryall hoped to put the lavatory door at the end of it between him and the lion. But his black servant had bolted it. The lion caught him at the end of the passage and leapt through the window with him in his mouth.

It was mainly the old lions that took to man-eating at this time. The younger and swifter ones had followed the big game from this temporarily drought-stricken region to the Athi Plains and beyond, where, as one rode out from camp, the rising sun which turned the snow-peak of Kenya to a glowing rose

silhouetted the horned hosts athwart the dewy herbage on which they browsed, as tamely as sheep, in those days.

When we first camped on the site of Nairobi on our way up country, there was only one corrugated iron shed there, and at the sound of our bugles a great herd of zebra came cantering up in fearless curiosity to find out what sort of animal's call it was. I was on my horse at the time. Something excited him, and he ran with me right into the herd, so that I could almost have touched a zebra on either side. Two years later we found a large iron town there, and a church parade in the same mode as then obtained in England. It is now a broadcasting station, speaking to us in less time than it took me to race its striped aborigines, and blocks of stately buildings are changing hands at fabulous prices. My brother was asked to chose a site for the future capital of British East Africa. He selected one on much higher ground, and consequently with a cooler climate than Nairobi, with scenery far more 'English', including cedar-like conifers, grassy downs, and an abundance of pure running water. It would have also been on the Uganda railway, and more centrally situated between East Africa and Uganda. But my brother's choice was overruled by officials who had never seen the country.

This beautiful and healthy White Man's Land under the Equator which is now a genuine British Colony of increasing importance, had, when we first saw it, only one or two British settlers, apart from officials, and my brother was among the first to proclaim the potentialities of Kenya Colony. Part of the

territory he administered has since been transferred to it.

His tour of inspection was very thorough from the first. Riding up the great Rift Valley, with its lakes, its volcanic fissures, its prairies (in which in those days the Masai alone kept cattle), we climbed up to temperate forests in the Kikuyu country and at the Eldama Ravine. Our provisions from England not having yet arrived, we lived during part of this journey on the game we shot. We were shy of drinking the Masai cows' milk, because though they did not offer it to us, as they themselves sometimes took it, mixed with blood, it was a common native practice in those days to dilute it with the cow's urine.

I think that Harry was the first to record native speech and song on a gramophone. It was easy to get the boisterous Masai to sing and talk into the 'little box', but when they heard their own voices coming out of it they turned and fled in consternation at the mocking little devil mimic. Their room was pleasanter in the tent than their company; for the rancid mutton fat mixed with red clay with which they had anointed their ruddily glistening bodies was rather overpowering at close quarters, though their appearance was magnificent.

Even finer looking were the completely naked Kavirondo of those days, round about the north-eastern corner of Lake Victoria Nyanza. Of these people Harry remarked in a letter to his wife 'They seem in their comely innocence not to have left the Garden of Eden. The women as a rule in Africa have ugly features, but many of these Kavirondo maids are

black beauties. I saw yesterday a pretty picture. A buxom black girl had hired her services as a grass cutter (for thatching huts). She had been impressed with the beauty of that most beautiful of all plants, the papyrus, and had cut for her own delectation three of four six-foot lengths of this glorious apple-green rush. There she stood, like an Egyptian painting, holding the waving rush stems, and half shading her smiling face with the silky filaments of their crowns.'

In this country our camp was suddenly overwhelmed one night by a cloud-burst and hurricane. Every tent was laid low, and the ground was at once transformed into a lake by the solid wall of water which descended on us. The staggering figures of half drowned men and stampeding animals were momentarily revealed by the blue electric flashes which ran along the ground. Our possessions were soaked, and it would have gone hard with us if this catastrophe had overtaken us at our next day's halt, away from the shelter of some huts. As it was, it was probably the soaking and chill we got in that frightful night which made us all ill with fever during our ensuing ride round the northern side of the great lake. In those days no attempt had been made to bridge the many swamps and rivers outside the actual kingdom of Uganda, and it was often with the greatest difficulty that we got our beasts over these. The path was so narrow that one groped one's way blindly through tunnels of greenery, stumbling over gnarled roots and prostrate trees and bringing one's head to the level of twisted ropes of flowering lianas and low-hanging branches, where one could only escape scalping by

lying flat and clasping the mule's head, seeking safety before dignity. But the gorgeous flowers and butterflies soon made one forget these little drawbacks. The beauty of the Nile in its birth at the Ripon Falls, where it thunders down from a narrowing northern gulf of the Victoria Nyanza, is an unforgettable sight. Here we entered the kingdom of Uganda Proper, by far the most civilized part of the Protectorate of that name. Gone were narrow, tortuous paths, unbridged rivers and unclothed people.

My brother made a state entry into Kampala, the native capital, where white-robed crowds, scarlet bunting, Indian troops and native musicians gave him an impressive welcome. After his Commission had been read to all the notables, he made speeches in English, French and Swahili in explanation of it. The French was for the benefit of the White Fathers. After this, the road for two miles from his house to the banqueting hall was lit up by thousands of Baganda holding torches, the effect of which was barbaric and splendid.

After the Christmas festivities with the young King Daudi which followed almost immediately on our arrival, my brother began a series of businesslike conferences with the Three Regents (representing the Protestant, Catholic and Moslem Baganda) to settle native land ownership, taxation, government and other important matters, which, unsettled, had been potential causes of friction between the Imperial Government and one of the most deserving and interesting nationalities under its ægis.

Owing to their ancient history and long isolated

civilization, their inborn courtesy and subtlety of mind, the Baganda may be aptly termed the Japanese of Africa. My brother (and Lord Salisbury in commissioning him) felt that they deserved more sympathetic and understanding treatment than they had received from the Acting Administration, which had, during an interregnum, been under the heavy hands of the Military. Colonel Ternan, the Acting Commissioner, was in some way the nominee of Sir Clement Hill at the Foreign Office. Both he and Sir Clement made no secret of the fact that they resented their makeshift administration being inquired into, overruled and superseded by the Special Commissioner, the more so in that Harry, though a civilian, had also been made Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces in Uganda. There had recently been a heated debate in the House of Commons as to the alleged mismanagement of affairs in Uganda, and the Government had soothed public opinion by the assurance that all would be set right now that Sir Harry Johnston had been placed in command. But this did not abate the resentment of those who considered themselves indirectly censured. The principal blame lay with those at home – not with a military officer who had been set by them to do work quite alien to his experience and training. While it is disagreeable to lay the onus on respected public servants now dead, my relation of the difficulties my brother overcame and the personal checks which he encountered would be neither candid nor complete if I failed to do so here and later in this chapter.

Contrary to what had happened in Nyasaland,

Harry's relations with the Missionaries in Uganda were entirely cordial. The Anglican Bishop Tucker, who seemed to start with a prejudice against him, ended by being most helpful in negotiating with native chiefs. He made effective use in public of the following quotation from my brother's book on Uganda:

> 'If the Baganda are to be sàved from dying out as a race it will be entirely through the introduction of Christianity and the teaching of the Roman and Anglican missionaries. Through this teaching the people are now becoming ashamed of marrying girls who have led a bad life. Their appreciation of female chastity is distinctly rising. The young men find debauchery no longer fashionable, and become the fathers of families. If ever missionaries did unqualified good among a negro race, this good has been accomplished in Uganda.'

That good work had been gravely jeopardized for a period by the disgraceful 'religious' war which had raged between the Protestants and Catholics. Although the Protestant Party were held to have got the best of it (they had a Gatling gun, and unaffectedly

> Proved their religion orthodox
> By Apostolic blows and knocks)

the Catholics, while conceding the tuition of the young King to their rivals, and the leading part in the Regency to the very able Sir Apolo Kagwa, maintained a fair share of influence. They countered the attempt to prejudice their cause in representing it politically 'French' (an evident absurdity, considering

the fierce anti-clericalism of the French Government) by inviting the English Catholic Bishop Hanlon of the Mill Hill Mission to collaborate with his French colleague, who was somewhat of an invalid, and certainly took no part whatever in politics. Harry invited Bishop Hanlon to make a speech at the coming of the New Year which also ushered in a new century, and privately hoped that he would 'do something Mediæval' to mark the occasion.

In a few months my brother concluded important and far-reaching agreements with the Baganda notables. These concerned the status of their King and Parliament, native taxation, the security of land tenure to the inhabitants, and the reservation of forests and unoccupied land as State property. Each of these enactments gave the completest and most enduring satisfaction to all concerned.

The fugitives of the Sudanese mutineers, who had murdered their British officers and raised a revolt, were eventually all shot or captured. In the early spring of 1900 Harry was contemplating a march up the Nile to the confines of the Sudan in order to completely pacify that marshy country, when he was suddenly stricken with Black Water Fever, and nearly died. Although he recovered with almost equal celerity, the doctors forbade him to visit the unhealthiest part of the Protectorate, and the Nile Province remained the only part of it which he never saw. In May, 1900, however, he began a tour of the rest of the country and its confines, part of which constituted one of the last bits of real exploration left to be accomplished in Africa.

His official headquarters were at Entebbe or Port Alice, where the Government offices were built on the richly wooded lakeward slopes of a much indented peninsula. His own house here was simply a clay and cow dung bungalow, roofed with thatch (which harboured many snakes, but was cool) and without any glass in the windows. But the view from its verandahs was superb. Behind, rose forested terraces which my brother laid out as a wild tropical park by simply clearing the dense tangle of undergrowth underneath the towering palms, incense trees and the species of *Ficus* from which the natives make terra-cotta-coloured bark cloth. On the figs of this tree great numbers of harsh-voiced but gorgeous scarlet and blue plantain eaters fed within sight of our house. One had but to go a few paces into the forest and sit quietly on a fallen tree trunk for troops of monkeys of many varieties to come chattering and gibbering at the intrusion, till a sudden movement would scatter them in great flying leaps back into the green obscurity above. Harry had brought two baboons here from the Rift Valley. As they were very mischievous, they were kept tied up outside the house. I once saw a black and white Colobus monkey come out of the forest to play with them. They seemed flattered by his attentions, but rather timorous, for he looked strikingly like a white-whiskered old gentleman wearing a black velvet skull cap.

The baboons were part of a large zoological collection acquired and kept by my brother for the London Zoo and the Natural History Museum at South Kensington. Natives were allowed by him to

pay their Hut or Gun Tax in such queer coin as pythons, puff adders, chimpanzees, baby elephants and zebras, eagles, and leopard-like Serval cats. There was a leopard too in the establishment, considered by Harry to be tame and entertainingly playful. Its playfulness on one occasion took the form of barking my shins with its claws, after having ingratiatingly wound its chain round me. I was obliged to half throttle it before I could extricate myself. The care of this animal and the rest of the Zoo and their ultimate conveyance to London was included by Harry in my secretarial duties. While he was stopping with Lord Cromer in Egypt I was involved in a dispute with the passengers and crew of our French steamer homewards on account of the 'playfulness' of this leopard, which broke loose during the voyage. At Marseilles, the Customs authorities refused to admit the existence of aye-ayes, kinkajous and hyraxes, and a special room had to be engaged and paid for at a Paris hotel under the heading of '*Appartement de singe*'.

At Entebbe Harry made a practice of having the baby elephant in to tea. It behaved with unexpected delicacy and good manners. It would help itself deftly to jam sandwiches from a plate, and then take its private milk bottle by the neck and pour the contents down its capacious gullet with a glug-glug sound, just like the courteous Spanish peasants drink wine when it is handed round. Only once did the elephant break crockery, and that was when he butted the butler on account of some little difference of opinion. This elephant's special chum was a zebra foal, and the two used regularly to go off for walks together. When the

zebra did not seem keen about a ramble in its noontide hours of siesta, the elephant would wind his trunk round the zebra's neck and tug.

An even more intelligent inmate of Harry's household at Entebbe was a chimpanzee, who made constant complaints to his master against the rude manners and hooligan tricks of the two baboons. In quiet dignity he matched Harry's black eagle, which with one swift stroke slew a privileged parrot for mocking him, and then disdained to even look at the carrion.

There was a large snake pit near our front door. I used to think that callers were far less numerous and less assured at Entebbe than at La Marsa, and that Harry was pleasantly aware of the fact. It was at Zomba, however, that a lion of his playfully knocked two men downstairs. It may have received a hint from a Blue Book (joyfully quoted by the Press), in which he complained of an incursion of tourists into Central Africa and their use of his house as an hotel, even to the extent of their taking the Residency sponge with them when they went away – spongeing with a vengeance!

Leopards, without any pretention to be tame, were pretty frequent visitors to us in the Entebbe of those days. But the crocodiles lurking in the wild garden by the lake shore were a more serious menace. A neighbour of ours lost his much prized cook, who failed to return after having gone down to draw water. On the following Sunday our friend went down to the lake shore near our house and shot a crocodile. In the contents of its stomach was identified a black hand with a silver ring on it which had belonged to the missing cook. The same sinister though beautiful inlet

between woods just below the cliff where our house stood was the sight of another tragedy. Sitting at dinner one night, we heard screams proceeding from the shore. Hurrying down, we discovered a girl and a crocodile in the midst of a frenzied crowd. When the girl had gone to draw water her extended arm had been grabbed by a crocodile hiding in the rushes. With her other arm she clung desperately to a tree to prevent herself being dragged under water. There was a terrible tug-of-war till the girl's relations hastened to her aid and killed the crocodile. His victim did not long survive him, for two days afterwards she died in hospital.

My brother's able Natural History collector, Mr. Doggett, also met his death by crocodiles, owing to his canoe being upset by a hippopotamus, an incident which had very nearly happened previously when I was with him. Although the open Victoria Nyanza is just like the ocean, its narrow fjords, running far into the mountainous shores, are sheltered from winds and waves, and are covered for miles with bright blue waterlilies. A bull hippopotamus with his cows and calves would mark off one of these inlets as his 'field', and resent the passage of a boat by walking along the bottom of the lake and bounding to the surface for a charge when he spied it just over him. He is less blusterously splenetic than his brother oddity, the rhinoceros, but is capable of achieving greater mischief. In framing his game laws, Harry was obliged, very reluctantly, to give but scant protection to the hippo, though all who wish for the retention of quaintness in nature will hope for its preservation from extinction in unna-

vigable waterways away from plantations, to which of course it does immense damage.

My brother was just in time to save from extinction the curious water antelope known as Speke's Tragelaph, living in the marshes of the Sese Islands, which often swims for miles between one island and another. The Sese Islands were the furthest land visible in the Lake from the cliff on which our Entebbe bungalow was built. They are very numerous, and one of them must be about as big as the Isle of Man. But as Lake Victoria is much larger than the Irish Sea, there is a far wider sea horizon south and east of them; for one can steam for two hundred miles either way without sighting land. The object of our visiting them was in strange contrast to their superlative natural beauty. My brother had to inquire into the rumoured existence in a secret, nocturnal society among these cultivated people of the most revolting type of cannibalism known to degenerate man – namely, the disinterring and devouring of dead bodies, raw, and in an advanced stage of decomposition. He had encountered or heard of such practices elsewhere in Africa, and discovered them surviving at a much later date in widely separated parts of the Dark Continent among peoples not physically or culturally the lowest, as I shall have occasion to record later on in this book. The body of one of the White Fathers, who had laboured amongst the Sese Islanders for some years and had died at his post, had mysteriously disappeared, and as there were no hyenas on this archipelago, suspicion fell on their human – or inhuman – imitators. Nothing, however, could be proved. When smiling elders of the islanders

came in shining white robes to meet our boat in a setting of cerulean sky and sea, a glittering strand, and the Paradisaical splendour and loveliness of grove and glade, it was hard to believe that in such a pleasing prospect man could be so vile. A few months after this, these islands were suddenly and terribly decimated by Sleeping Sickness, and – evacuated by Government order – remained alone in their beauty of bird and bower. I trust that by now they have once again become an earthly paradise for a people purged of pestilence, both moral and physical.

Among other large islands which Harry visited on his tour of inspection was one still entirely Pagan, at that time, called Buvuma. It contained mountains rising to a temperate climate, more than 2,000 feet above the Lake, which itself is 3,775 feet above sea level. Buvuma must be about the size of the Isle of Wight. But we were greeted on its forested shores by one strange and solitary personage only. He was an albino boy, quite naked, save for a belt, on which was hung a bow and a quiverful of arrows. His skin was quite white, and this, combined with chubby features and negroid, curly hair, gave him exactly the look of Cupid. He seemed indeed to have been regarded as a semi-sacred phenomenon by his people; for his business was to tend the quaint little forest shrines erected to the spirits, in which food was placed and renewed at intervals.

This great Lake may be likened to an Equatorial Aegean. There is something about its many mysterious islands which recalls to one's fancy the pristine beauty and wonder of the Isles of Greece, when their

unviolated woods whispered the secrets of the Gods and the lure of satyrs, fauns and nymphs. The dense forest of Buvuma (in which grew a fruit like a delicious golden plum) contrasted with stark fantastic pyramids of piled up rocks. Monsters were reputed to haunt the depths of this great land-locked sea. From a cliff, I once myself saw some serpentine creature, far larger than any python, swimming at a great pace, not with the side-to-side paddling of any known water-snake, but in a looping, rippling fashion, like a hugely magnified and accelerated caterpillar on the march. Some of the monsters which the natives reported as haunting the Lake may have been the weird and frightening waterspouts which are of frequent occurrence on it.

CHAPTER IX

At the end of May, 1900, my brother set out on a journey to Mount Ruwenzori and the Congo Free State which was to have important scientific results. For he went in the dual capacity of administrator and explorer.

We looked rather like a travelling circus. Harry could not bear to be parted from all his animals when on *safari;* so favoured monkeys, perched on the woolly heads of porters, peered above the waving elephant grass, sunflowers, and blazing scarlet Ekirikiti trees covering successive hill-furrows which our caravan climbed in single file, to find another and yet another hill beyond. The valleys in between were traversed on causeways of wattle and sunbaked mud. These helped to impede the flow of sluggish rivers, whose beds in consequence had become crowded with both swamp and forest growth, giving grateful shade for halts and lunch. Not that one ate much in the heat of the day. But we drank tea by the gallon, unboiled water being full of wriggling horrors, capable of becoming intestinal worms a foot long. To furnish milk for the tea, goats and cows were always taken along with our caravan. My brother considered that the difficulty and delay in getting these over unbridged rivers was a lesser evil to enduring tinned milk.

His golden rule for breakfast while on the march was Spartan but wise. It was eaten with our loins

girt, and standing, like the Passover, but never in company. He did not think it a tactful moment for social intercourse, when one's dreams have been but lately shattered by the call of a bugle, and there is nothing for it but to munch by the remains of a camp fire while one's belongings are already on the move. He had known more than one African expedition to have been wrecked by ill-timed attempts at conversation when tempers are at their worst.

Afternoon tea was also a meal we took separately, as soon as we had pitched our tents, and could rest and read in their green shade, thankful to be freed from most of our clothing.

At dinner, on the other hand, Harry was inexorable on his travelling staff appearing in full evening dress, and the Goanese cook knew he was expected, like their dress, to remind the company of civilization. Conversation and cards were then encouraged by the camp fire, the smoke of which somewhat mitigated the swarm of night-flying insects, whose object in life seemed to be to commit suicide in the soup. Hyenas might be laughing like maniacs in the outer darkness, the tree-hyraxes be emitting their unearthly screams above the incessant chorus of frogs and crickets. The hideous flying foxes or fruit bats might pass like evil spirits above our narrow circle of light. Our porters might sing barbarically of love and of pumpkins; but this was our hour of home talk, of Europe, of mind, rather than matter. Hence the significant symbol of the white shirt in the Dark Continent. The Press was quick to appreciate the meaning of Harry's table in the wilderness, realizing

that when white men abandon the symbols of civilization in the tropics they tend to lose its substantial and spiritual gains.

But the white shirt was only a part of Harry's symbolism. In Africa, when his Secretaries' day's work was done, there was still a use to which their bodies could be put. They represented so much available advertising space – some more, some less – for the exhibition of his Black, White and Yellow interracial policy. The first two colours of his tricolor were already exhibited in their conventional evening dress; but for the third he imposed upon them yellow waistcoats. Courage failed us, however, to appear canary-waisted in England. Had we done so, the sign might have worked wonders.

During this journey into the heart of Africa we were waited on by gnome-like Pygmies whom we were bringing back to their Congo forests, Harry having intercepted a German who had kidnapped them for the Paris Exhibition. One of them had died in Uganda before we came away, and my brother got permission from his fellows to bury the body in an ant-hill, so that in a very short time the skeleton of this ape-like little man was ready to be sent to the South Kensington Museum, where it is now exhibited. This method of removing flesh from bodies did not seem so expeditious when it was practised on live subjects in Uganda in the days before the British Protectorate, when an escaped slave or wife on recapture might be pegged down across one of the regular roads made by the marching soldier ants. Casual attacks from these terrible insects when one is

on the march give one a faint idea as to what it must have been like to be at their mercy before those tactless missionaries and British officials refused to 'let the natives alone'.

Some big ex-cannibal neighbours of the Pygmies, their teeth filed to sharp points and their faces horribly scarred, also accompanied us. One of them made the best servant I ever had, especially as regards daily packing, though on first contact with Europeans he thought our boots were natural hoofs and part of our anatomy.

We made a long enough halt in Toro for my brother to settle the affairs of that western kingdom of the Protectorate as he had those of the bigger kingdom of Uganda. My brother made his headquarters here at what had hitherto been flippantly named Fort Gerry, after Sir Gerald Portal. He re-christened the place Fort Portal, as being more dignified and appropriate; for it was the portal to the wonderland of Ruwenzori, looming in the clouds above, and also to the mysterious Congo Forest beyond.

The Hima aristocracy hereabouts had often quite pale skins and almost European features, and recalled Sir Rider Haggard's stories of a white race in the heart of Africa.

From Fort Portal we descended two thousand feet to a level plain with shortish red grass, dotted with dwarf acacia trees and euphorbias looking like cacti of great size. A great many rivers, cold from the snows of the Ruwenzori range, flowed across our line of march. They were all unbridged, and the country appeared uninhabited, but rich in game. Sometimes

we came up with elephants. Looking through a glass at a great herd of them lollopping down the steep banks of the Ruahara River, it was interesting and touching to see the little ones seeking protection beneath their mothers. The waterbuck here were magnificent, and Harry painted a study of them which was afterwards shown at the Academy. Lions also were numerous, and took two men from a station the night before we reached it. My brother complained of his bad luck in never actually coming up with them, and still drew a blank on hurrying to a spot where I reported suddenly coming face to face with one, which after an astonished stare at my unappetizing sun helmet, green butterfly net and blue goggles had crashed away into a cane-brake. A man who traced his descent from Hereward the Wake came into our camp one day minus one side of his face, which had been clawed away by a lion, leaving simply a scarlet mask. But the fact that it had healed up, minus one eye, tended to show that a lion's claws are not as poisonous as a leopard's.

The domain of the lion and the range of big game abruptly ceased when we entered the great Congo Forest after being very cordially received and fêted by the representatives of the Congo Free State at Fort Mbeni. They had discussed with Harry the existence of a strange, zebra-marked animal in the forest, which creature they had never seen, but had heard stories of from the Pygmies, who hunted it for food. Harry, for his part, had for years been on the track of the persistent 'unicorn' legend, and had guessed that, just as the once fabled existence of the Pygmies

had been proved to be truth, so the unicorn might really exist in the shape of some horned, horse-like animal in the heart of Africa. He paid more serious heed to the Pygmies' stories of such a beast than did the Belgians who had been longer in contact with them. They told my brother that the name they gave to this animal was *Okapi*.

Our journey into the Congo forest was in part an attempt to find it. But, like the Snark, it had 'softly and suddenly faded away' before the din made by the Negro soldiers supplied by the Congo authorities as our escort. On the banks of a forest stream the Dwarfs did indeed show us its foot prints. Then some of the soldiers brought my brother portions of the skin of one, which, being taken from the legs only, bore a superficial resemblance to that of a zebra. As we advanced further into the forest, riding became impossible, owing to the low-hanging lianas and the soggy state of the ground. In the impressive and oppressive gloom, the soldiers, to keep their courage up, continually sounded their bugles, and in consequence scared away every living creature, except gorgeous butterflies and bird-eating spiders with golden webs. The many layers of dense foliage overhead, completely hiding the sky, were bombarded by perpetual and torrential thunderstorms with a sound like musketry punctuated by terrific crashes of heavy guns. Even when this inferno ceased, the atmosphere, like the ground, was as full of water as a sponge, this being one of the wettest spots on the globe not actually submerged by ocean. At times indeed the illusion was strong in this ghostly gloom, as we stag-

gered, half-blinded and choked through the reek of it, that we were being drowned in a thicket of seaweed, in the stagnant zone beneath a storm-tossed sea.

At length we reached a collection of beehive huts made of the leaves of wild plantains, about the height of an ordinary dining-room table. It was the Pygmy village. Our little friends were transported with delight to regain what to us was an almost unhabitable abode. They stilled the fears of their kinsfolk by singing the praises of the white man, and danced for us in a clearing by moonlight, looking more than ever like elves and gnomes. It was Harry's theory indeed that Europe in bygone ages was inhabited by a Pygmy race, and that the bigger people who superseded them wove about their memory and passed on to us stories of 'Little People' and pixies who played thievish pranks by night and disappeared into trees.

These Bambute Dwarfs of the eastern Congo Forest played with fire without hurt in a way which recalled to us the marvellous immunity of the Aissowia of Tunis. They not only walked on red hot charcoal, but took sticks of it between their teeth and bit it. Some of their more unsophisticated relations in the depths of the forest had not yet mastered the difficult art of making fire. Their favourite food seemed to be a large white grub found under the bark of trees, but they demonstrated to us the effectiveness of their poisoned arrows against bigger 'game'.

We little thought that we should afterwards see some of this tribe in England, though they expressed a desire to visit us, very much as a child might want to see what was in the moon. But when my brother

was living in London, some of these dwarfs, escorted by a white friend, came to see him. Mr. Wells's men who got to the moon could not have received more astounding impressions than did these Forest Dwarfs in London. It was a world altogether so strange as to be past comprehension or comparison. Yet three homely things – albeit on a gigantic scale – struck them – they confided to my brother – as being 'very good'. They were: (1) The amazing abundance of meat displayed; (2) The noble proportions of Lord Salisbury's stomach; (3) Our migrations at flying speed in 'flocks of houses'. A bus or tram appeared to them a palatial mansion, and a train was a whole street stampeded.

My brother's journey into the Congo Forest revealed the fact that the gorilla extends to its extreme eastern limits, and the chimpanzee even beyond it, into the forests of the extreme western part of the Uganda Protectorate. We thought one night that we heard one of the much-talked-of chimpanzee 'concerts' – the loud call of hoo-hoo-hoo in unison, and the resonant banging of what might have been a hollow tree.

But by far the most important zoological discovery of this journey, or of any other within modern times, was the discovery of the Okapi. A complete skin of this new mammal was not obtained by my brother till some months later, when it was supplied by the Pygmies he had spoken to, and forwarded to him with two skulls by the Congo officials. From the teeth in the skulls, my brother at once deduced the fact that this was no zebra, as its skin and shape might have implied, but a very distinct relation of the

Giraffes, actually the living representatives of fossil forms found in Greece. This was confirmed by scientists in Europe, and the new beast named by them *Ocapia johnstoni*. Some good specimens of it are to be seen in the South Kensington Museum, which exhibit tints of rich vinous purple and chestnut above the zebra stripes – one of the brightest and most effective colour schemes of any creature above the ranks of birds.

At the time we were in the forest, there seemed more to investigate in botany than in zoology. My brother noted what a large proportion of the trees and vines were rubber-bearing. It was before the great rush for rubber, and only a few murmurs were as yet heard as to King Leopold's cosmopolitan staff in the Congo State. We saw several mutilated people – minus one arm, a hand or a nose. When interrogated by my brother, they all asserted they had received this maltreatment from the Arab traders and their armed bands, who had been at war with the Congo Administration. There was nothing whatever to show that the latter was in the least oppressive towards the natives in *the part we visited*. On the contrary, the Belgian and Swedish officials won Harry's highest enconiums for their humanity, ability and self-sacrifice. The Belgian Commandant who had been our very kind host died of fever soon after we left. We were obliged to hasten our own departure from the Forest owing to the deadliness of its climate, and we breathed more freely when we reached the sunny grasslands by Lake Albert Edward, near the frontier. There were minor lakes hereabouts

THE OKAPI *(Ocapia Johnstoni)*

From a sketch by its discoverer, reproduced by permission of the Illustrated Newspapers, Ltd.

of great interest. One was blood red in colour, and another, of exquisite clarity and great depth, we found in the crater of an extinct volcano, whose steep sides were clothed with hanging forest of exquisite beauty, mirrored in the water below. Weird illusions of ice in the tropics were afforded by the mock lakes – gleaming sheets of dry salt, to which buffalos resorted eagerly.

But we were soon to meet real ice under the Equator; for our next journey was the ascent of Ruwenzori. It was fascinating to traverse within a few days or weeks every zone of climate and vegetation, from Equatorial to Arctic, and from arid steppe in parts of Ankole to the saturated cloud belt, which was so dense that although we were travelling round and on Ruwenzori for six months, on only six occasions did we see its glaciers and snow-fields. At seven, eight and nine thousand feet, the vegetation of the Tropical and Temperate zones mingled in bewildering confusion. Conspicuous were tree-ferns of great beauty. Then came forests of tree-heaths, allied to those of the Riviera and Canary Island mountains, but larger. And from here upwards we were constantly touched by reminders of England, such as blackberries, buttercups, dog roses and violets, and many natural lawns of short, verdant turf. In the cloud belt the mountain side was like a sponge, carpeted thickly with many brilliantly coloured mosses, while the trees were veiled with streamers of grey lichen.

The last stage of the climb was through weird vegetation, which might have been that of another

planet. It was as though the plants had been turned into sculptured stone, for they assumed the size and shape of the broken but upright columns of ruined temples, of obelisks – straight pillars and cones fifteen feet high and closely encrusted with minute blue flowers, shown to belong to the family of our lowly garden lobelia. Then there was the almost equally formal-looking *Senecio johnstoni* which Harry had first discovered on Mount Kilimanjaro.

But prolonged botanizing was a matter of extraordinary difficulty. Except for a few narrow rock shelters, there was no refuge from the constant driving rain, hail and snow, and the clammy embrace of clouds chilled us to the bone. Snow lay permanently in some places as low as 13,000 feet. When the expedition got to nearly 15,000 feet, no further progress could be made without Alpine equipment, on account of sheer cliffs of ice. On the snow were the footprints of leopards, which seem to hunt the hyraxes at this great height.

The effect of the cold, wet and rarefied atmosphere on the health of the expedition became alarming. One of the porters died of pneumonia, and the rest would soon have become too ill to move if the attempt to reach the summit of the range had been persisted in.

Besides, the porters had a superstitious fear of the bogy which they believed to haunt the mountain tops. They said there was a 'hollow man' of gigantic stature, armed with a club, who walked upon the clouds and rode on them. If he managed to get behind you, you were a dead man, but if you could manage to circle round him quickly and discover his hollow

back, he disappeared. It became evident to us in what manner this picturesque myth arose. The clouds which rushed upon us sometimes looked extraordinarily solid and threatening. If they moved parallel with the climber, and he stood between them and the bright sun, an enormous shadow of him would be screened on the wall of vapour, and appear both ghostly and menacing. So it happened that the more timid of our men remained at the base camp at 9,000 feet, where, to my chagrin, it was necessary for me to remain most of the time myself to prevent a further downward stampede and guarantee relays of supplies to the higher party. My only reward was the discovery and scientific parenthood of the ugliest known reptile – a wall-eyed chameleon with three horns, like some Apocalyptic or Medieval dragon in miniature.

But the prudent porters who remained at the base camp scored a point. Harry's Sudanese orderly had cried shame on the cowards as he left in the company of the bolder spirits, to whom he was useful as a ladder for climbing miniature cliffs, as he was six feet and six inches in height. His parting jeer was that he was going to amass a store of the precious 'salt' which glistened on the summits, salt being always an article of value to Negroes for preserving meat. When this man came away from the snow, he filled his pockets and a satchel with it, still believing it to be especially fine salt, and set off in triumph down the mountain to its lower and warmer slopes. When he came within earshot of the porters at the base camp, he again taunted them with their cowardice, and boasted of his store of salt.

'Show us your salt, then,' they demanded when he came up with them. His face fell when he opened his satchel and searched in his pockets, to find them wet and empty. 'You liar!' shouted the delighted porters getting their own back. 'It must be magic salt,' the sergeant said ruefully, and stalked away crestfallen.

On the flanks of Ruwenzori we found hot springs as evidence of its partly volcanic origin. The hot water comes bubbling up and fills pools and basins in the rock. We found whole families thoroughly enjoying mixed bathing in these natural hot baths. Warmth, rather than the next best thing to godliness, was their object. For, as they wore nothing at any time, hot water was pleasanter to them than the cold air of this altitude when the sun went in, so they lay and reclined in it in attitudes of languorous ease.

The first climber to reach the highest points of the Ruwenzori range was the Duke of Abruzzi, uncle of the King of Italy. He first consulted my brother as to the best means of accomplishing his ascent, and then took with him the best Alpine guides and equipment. On his return to Europe, he lectured before our Royal Geographical Society, King Edward being present, and discussed with Harry the fascinating problems of 'The Mountains of the Moon' at the Italian Embassy luncheon in December, 1907. I think it was on his initiative that my brother was awarded a Gold Medal by the Italian Royal Geographical Society. The Duke of Abruzzi is certainly a man of lofty aims, sharing, as he does, with the present Pope, a well-deserved fame as an enthusiastic and skilful mountaineer.

But just as on Kilimanjaro my brother's political and patriotic ambitions had to be subordinated to the aims of his scientific mission, so, on the contrary, his political post in Uganda forbade him to devote any more time to the scientific aspects of Ruwenzori.

His mail brought him disagreeable news – a formidable rising of the Nandi tribe at the other end of the Protectorate, and athwart its vital artery, the Uganda Railway. There was a batch of carping, quarrelsome letters from Sir Clement Hill, the man whose policy was identified with the late militarization of the Administration of Uganda, which my brother was replacing by a sympathetic concordat with enlightened and responsible native opinion. On top of these letters, with their perpetual challenge to my brother's reforming zeal, came a curt intimation that Sir Clement was coming out to Uganda to examine things for himself – to judge the work of a man whom Lord Salisbury had sent to judge and improve upon the work of others.

Harry commented on the situation in a letter to his wife:

> 'The Foreign Office continues not only to oppose most of my reforms, but seems to let its feeling of opposition to them leak out, so that some of my subordinates here hesitate to carry out my instructions. The sort of hint thrown out seems to be "All right: let him have his way seemingly. Keep quiet, wait till he has left Uganda for ever, and we can put the old people back".
>
> Brodrick sends me out flattering messages from Lord Salisbury and from Sir Michael Hicks-Beach

(who is pleased at my financial work), but I can see that he and Lord Salisbury are leaving everything to Hill, who of course longs for me to leave Uganda.'

Earlier, he had written less despondently:

'I have had a most kind and encouraging letter from Mr. Brodrick. The Ministry evidently attaches the greatest importance to my work out here, and, as Mr. Brodrick says, my appointment helps the Government to stave off Opposition attacks on their Uganda policy, because I seem to inspire confidence among Liberal politicians. Of course this sentiment does not affect the present attitude of Hill, —— and ——, who still continue trying to put spokes in my wheels. But there are signs that Brodrick and Lord Salisbury are not going to allow fractious opposition to continue. The matter, however, is soon coming to an issue over questions of the Estimates and my scheme of military reorganization. Either Lord Salisbury must allow my views to prevail, or I shall be obliged to resign. But I am grateful for Mr. Brodrick's letter. It came at a time when I needed encouragement. Do not imagine I have broken openly with any of the men to whom I allude. Of course I remain, officially, studiously civil. The war is a covert one. If I prevail, I shall say as little about it as possible.

I appreciated your remarks on that newspaper extract which spoke of the enormous rewards Lugard and myself met with in our careers. As you say, there is something ironical about it when as the result of a career under which I have served the Government fifteen years (nearly all that time

in unhealthy climates), and indirectly (at my father's expense) for eighteen years, I now find myself relegated to an exile which my wife can scarcely share, at a salary just equal to that which is allotted to some of the inferior West Indian posts, and immeasurably below most Colonial Governorships. Of course there are compensations. I feel that I am doing a little bit of history here. I have had a splendid success over the new Agreement with the King, chiefs and people of Uganda. Here was a King in his minority, three native Regents, well educated men, using typewriters! – a native Parliament, and an aristocracy of about one thousand petty chiefs to deal with. I soon realized that I should have no hope of concluding the Treaty without the goodwill of the Missionaries. I soon had the Anglican Bishop and Archdeacon as my interpreters, and negotiated the terms of the Treaty in their presence. I found that it was easy to make friends with the French missionaries and induce them to use the same influence with their converts, because they were the White Fathers from Tunis, and some of them had known us there. You had once given tea to Père Delatre, who is now the French Bishop's chaplain.

I signed the Treaty with considerable pomp and circumstance at Kampala, the Government suburb of the native capital of Mengo, and entertained the Chiefs, the Bishops and the leading officials afterwards. That nice fellow Jackson, the Deputy Commissioner, gave us an excellent dinner in the evening, and the chiefs lit up the whole town by one of their torch-light processions.

I seem to have become extraordinarily popular

with the Baganda chiefs, why, I do not know, except perhaps that I treat them much as I should treat decently behaved white men. This Agreement will be the making of Uganda. It gives us complete control over the land, the forests, the native army, the minerals and highways, and the right to raise a very large revenue by taxation. In return, we pay from these taxes salaries to the Kabaka and the chiefs acting as Government officials. They, and about a thousand native land-owners, have their estates guaranteed to them, but we acquire control over the rest. The Baganda are quite as much developed in civilization as the Abyssinians. The idea that their native ruler, who is descended from a long line of kings, beginning with a contemporary of our Henry IV, is recognized by the title of Highness has weighed with them more than anything else. I honestly think myself that this Treaty is the most important success I have had.'

It was the working of this Agreement which was now questioned and put in jeopardy by the unprecedented incident of Sir Clement Hill, the Foreign Office head of the African Department, coming out on an unofficial special commission of his own to criticize in the presence of subordinates the Special Commissioner's acts and methods. In the days of Sir Percy Anderson and Sir Villiers Lister such things would not have been possible, both for political and personal reasons. Harry has left it on record that Sir Percy was like a second father to him, and Sir John Kirk wrote to him at the time of the far-back Jaja trouble, 'Villiers is your friend'. Sir Villiers, in retirement, himself wrote to Harry in 1899:

'I am distressed at the things I hear from time to time about the F.O. I cannot help feeling that there is a reign of fuss and worry, and that the personal relations between those in the Office and the Consular and Diplomatic Services, particularly the former, are by no means as friendly and intimate as they were.'

'Fuss and worry' had indeed superseded the good old policy of trusting the man on the spot to know better what local conditions demanded than an elderly Permanent Official with permanent prejudices and limitations, who had never before been in Africa. Perhaps the improved facilities for comfortable travel were partly the cause of this plague of officialdom. The Uganda Railway had just reached the shores of Lake Victoria Nyanza, and Harry's headquarters at Entebbe were now in telegraphic communication with Downing Street – a very doubtful blessing.

Besides encouraging fuss and worry, this telegraph line was the main cause of the Nandi War. For these people, in lieu of clothes, loved to adorn themselves and their women with coils of shining metal, wound round and round their limbs and necks. The gleaming new copper telegraph wire was an irresistible temptation to them – just the same lure as a hundred miles of unprotected jewellers' shops would offer to the less noble savages of London. The magic wire became the latest thing in wearing apparel for the Nandi dandy, and his key to the heart of Mrs. Nandi.

They nearly completed our severance from the outside world by plundering and killing postal couriers and threatening the Uganda Railway. So my brother

sent a strong force against them, with such success that 150 of their toughest braves asked to be enrolled in his new Police before he left the Protectorate. It had always been his policy to convert poachers into keepers, and many of his far-famed African Rifles had begun by fighting against him and ended by fighting for the British all over the Dark Continent. Harry justified his commission as Commander-in-Chief by creating a less costly and formal and much more mobile Police force in the Protectorate than had existed previously.

No one could have wished for more loyal and appreciative colleagues and friends than were the officials, Bishops and native Regents to my brother when Sir Clement Hill took the extraordinary step of summoning them to a secret conference and asking them bluntly what they thought of 'Johnston's measures'. What they all did think was outspokenly expressed by Bishop Tucker. Faced with this unanimous opinion and the ocular evidence of the prosperous and settled state of the Protectorate, Sir Clement himself could not but record his approval.

Of public opinion at home there could be no doubt. Mr. Brodrick wrote to my brother: 'The fact that you take a favourable view of the progress and prospects of the Protectorate produced a marked impression on the House. . . . You would, I am sure, have been satisfied with the confidence generally expressed in you.'

Before closing his work for Uganda, Harry made one more journey into the wild – his last bit of exploration. It was round the starfish-shaped plateau of Mount Elgon, as large as Yorkshire, which reaches

heights of 14,000 feet and incloses what is probably the largest crater in the world. We found its slopes to be honeycombed with caves, enlarged, adapted and inhabited by an ape-like and very hostile race of savages – the Mbai – wearing nothing but a crescent of wild boar's tusks on their foreheads. They attacked us with fury, rolling rocks down the mountain side on us and hurling spears. A Sikh soldier near me had his arm crushed by a bounding boulder, and the order had to be given for a volley. One of the enemy fell dead, and the rest scuttled into their warren. The great mountain seemed to swallow them up.

We camped for the night on the ground we had conquered, and next day peace was made after a long and patient explanation of his aims delivered by Harry to these, the most savage people in the Protectorate. They were men of abnormally short legs, long arms and low brows.

Not without some apprehension of treachery, we proceeded to look into some of their extraordinary caves, which were variously used as dwelling-houses, cow-byres and granaries. Joseph Thomson, who first discovered these caves of Elgon, held that they had been executed by a vanished and civilized race – mined for jewels of some kind. Probably this hint may have been the germ of Rider Haggard's fascinating story, *King Solomon's Mines*. There was something of magic about the place. What puzzled us in the brief battle we had fought was that our assailants seemed to spring out of the earth, and when we pursued were swallowed up as suddenly in the thunder and foam of a Niagara-like cascade which leapt from misty heights

above to dizzy depths below, with no dry, safe foothold visible on the sheer side of a precipice. Careful investigation, however, showed us that this waterfall in its giddy leap fell curtainwise across the mouth of a cave. A very narrow ledge of level rock passed immediately under the flashing veil of water, and enabled you, if you had the nerve, to pass under the falls dryshod, and into the cave behind them. Turning back, and looking through the falling water, revealed a vision indescribably beautiful and awe-inspiring. A securer fortress could not have been devised. So long as the sun shone, you lived here in the heart of a rainbow; for the misty edges of the crashing torrent were a perpetual prism, and the rock gardens thus moistened seemed to reproduce in their masses of glistening blossoms most of the seven primary colours. Countless brilliant butterflies, rising from the moist ground at one's approach, gave one the illusion that half the flowers had taken wings.

After crossing Elgon in a snowstorm, our expedition descended on to the great lofty Gwash Ngishu Plateau, a white man's country if ever there was one, though under the Equator. Here we were among bamboos and cedars, with frosty nights and perfect days, in an Eden from which man alone was absent. Beasts, large and small, in unimagined numbers and variety, swarmed around us without either fear or aggression. Hosts of zebras and of hartebeests, and tribes of smaller antelopes crossed and re-crossed before us. Ostriches were visible, scudding against the skyline. A rhinoceros crashed by, and what we had mistaken for dappled trunks and branches of acacia

trees betwixt sunshine and the shade of sombre cedars, stalked off before our astonished eyes, and revealed themselves to be a herd of seventeen giraffes of abnormally dark colouring. Just for once Harry allowed a shot to break the peace of Eden. A monster male fell, and for the first time the Five-horned Giraffe was revealed to science. We wandered so long in this paradise of big game that the scarcity of food at length compelled us to shoot our meat, but nothing like a general battu for that purpose was ever allowed by my brother in what he afterwards officially proclaimed as a game reserve or park for the wonder and joy of posterity. For weeks we lived perforce on such a varied diet as giraffe marrow, ostrich eggs, haunch of antelope and braized zebra steaks. Once we grilled for supper a gigantic species of rat – chestnut spotted with white like a fallow deer – and very delicious it was. The big men who name new animals in London that others have brought from the far corners of the earth decided to call Harry's Five-horned Giraffe after Lord Rothschild. My brother's only concern was to preserve it otherwise than in museums. He held that the only justification for exhibiting stuffed animals to the untravelled public was to rouse their interest in them sufficiently to prevent the ruthless and generally senseless extinction of the wild life which is the very soul of a country's scenery. My brother's Game Laws did not make him loved by the head-hunter; and the sanctuary of the national parks he established has far too often been violated in a country whose subsequent exploitation has been rapid. But if East Africa still offers to the traveller and settler the most wonderful

sights of animate Nature in the whole world, it is largely thanks to my brother's ideal of true sportsmanship which he spent the remainder of his life in making known.

Mr. R. L. Pocock, one of our leading scientific zoologists wrote (in *The Field*):

> 'I was always impressed by Sir Harry Johnston's astuteness, the originality of his views as a Naturalist, and his inquisitiveness. He speculated on the origin of creatures and the lines of migration that account for the present distribution of the various groups. He had a habit of inserting in discursive articles illuminating suggestions or guesses – disconcerting when discovered haphazard by later investigators. On more than one occasion I found he had anticipated me in ideas and discoveries I fancied were new . . . and his guesses were sometimes inspired solely by inspection of the living animal with his artist's eye. From watching the behaviour of monkeys, he guessed that the mangabeys are the nearest living allies of the baboons, and this guess, like many others, I subsequently found to be true. These few instances show that his mind was a speculative, inquiring type. For his services in securing the okapi, the Zoological Society awarded Sir Harry Johnston the gold medal, an honour rendered particularly marked by its having been only once previously conferred, namely, upon King Edward VII.'

"ONE OF THE MIGHTIEST FACTORS YET INTRODUCED INTO CENTRAL AFRICA."
(Sir H-rry J-hnst-n, K.C.B.)

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CHAPTER X

On his way to England in the early summer of 1901, Harry stopped for a while in Egypt to confer with Lord Cromer on questions affecting the Uganda Protectorate and the Sudan. Communications had practically ceased between these two countries, though their frontiers march together, because, during Mahdi misrule, their connecting highway, the Nile, had become completely blocked by interlacing water-weeds, often forming floating islands, called the sudd. After Kitchener's re-occupation of the Egyptian Sudan, it had taken years to cut through this sudd obstruction to navigation. But before Harry left Uganda boats had begun to ply again, hindered only by occasional rapids, between the Northern or Nile Province of Uganda and Khartum. Harry wished a survey to be made for the more economical canalization and storage of flood water so that there might be more available at the right season for irrigation in the north. He held that the Nile must of necessity prove a political link between all countries through which it runs. It was certainly strange that communications between the lower Nile valley and Central Africa, in which the White Nile rises, had been so completely interrupted since Ancient Egyptian Times. My brother dealt very thoroughly, mainly from the historical point of view, with this subject in his book, *The Nile Quest*. He had made the interesting discovery in Uganda of glass beads of Ancient Egyptian origin, and showed how

the Uganda harp was practically identical in design with that depicted on Egyptian monuments.

Federation of the different British-controlled states of Eastern Africa, not yet accomplished, strange to say, was again being mooted, and Harry was strongly in favour of it, provided sufficient autonomy was maintained by native kingdoms like Uganda and by each constituent State of the Confederation. His name was indeed put forward by East African confederationists as the first Governor-General of a United East Africa. But it is doubtful whether he would have accepted such a post. His health had been so undermined by twenty years in more or less unhealthy Africa as to forbid his return to it. It was generally assumed that his administrative abilities would be given scope elsewhere in the Empire or in the Diplomatic Service. Tunis had been hitherto regarded as an opening to the Diplomatic Service, and as the Central African territories he had administered under the Foreign Office were about to be transferred to the Colonial Office, many intelligent anticipations were made by Press men as to Harry's future work in either the Colonial or Diplomatic Services. Press men have a naïve way of proposing such posts; but it is the Unknown Demigods of Downing Street who dispose of them. The close corporation guarding what are euphemistically called the Public Services was preparing to do battle against the intrusion into their preserves of a man still only forty-three whom they had always regarded as an 'outsider' because he had not entered officialdom by the strait gate of routine. This attitude was for a time only patent to Harry him-

self and a few others behind the scenes. Its public expression would have been in too marked contrast to that of King Edward, who was most gracious and approving when Harry gave him an account of his work in Uganda. After listening and questioning, the King gave evidence of his proverbially good memory for personal details by referring to incidents and individuals in Harry's Tunisian home at the time of Queen Alexandra's visit to it more than two years previously. At the next bestowal of honours he conferred on him the Grand Cross of St. Michael and St. George. In this capacity Harry attended the deferred Coronation, and whiled away the long wait in the Abbey by talking to Madame Sarah Bernhardt till the King, returning from the altar after the ceremony, passed by in procession and gave a special greeting of the eyes to the 'divine Sarah'.

In Harry's earlier days, it was one of his ambitions to meet and know, off the stage, the leading actors and actresses of the day, imagining them to be especially witty, brilliant, and, above all, unconventional people. In the case of Madame Sarah Bernhardt of course it was so. But it so happened that about this time Harry received an invitation to a purely Stage dinner party, at which all the actresses he had ever admired from afar were to be introduced to him. He went delightedly, expecting to have an entrancing evening. What actually happened fell very far short of his expectations of being amused and charmed. The conversation of the Stage wits and beauties was banal and conventional, and only amusing in a wry way because it was so unrestrainedly and competitively

snobbish. Where Harry had hoped for daring sallies and brilliant repartee he heard only rapturous enconiums of 'the deah Duchess' or enquiries after Lord So-and-So, a Stage-struck peer whose title bulked considerably bigger than his brains. It must be remembered that this was a quarter of a century ago, and that the Stage in private life has, socially speaking, never ceased to evolve since Queen Victoria gave it a cachet and encouragement greater than any it had earned in other countries and at other times.

Although Harry's official connection with East Africa ceased at the close of September, 1901, his interest in its progress was permanent. He gave himself little rest till he had completed his really monumental work in two volumes entitled *The Uganda Protectorate* (Hutchinson). This included 48 coloured plates from his own paintings, and 506 other illustrations, mainly from his own drawings and photographs. Although this was published as far back as 1902, it is still the standard work on the country in regard to anthropology, Natural History, botany, climate and all else not since modified by twenty years of progress. I doubt if any other work of reference has been so sumptuously illustrated by its author and at the same time so copiously annotated with scientific information of every kind, made attractive by vivid pen-pictures of the country. Owing to the necessary expense in reproduction, however, Harry's remuneration was hardly commensurate with his exceptionally wide knowledge and labours. It may be remarked here that although his books were nearly always enthusiastically reviewed

he made little by them until he took to writing fiction that could be sold at popular prices.

He made much more by writing for the Press, and especially the *Graphic*, in which his illustrations were for many years a well-known feature. He has left it on record that from the time when he first made the acquaintance of Mr. W. L. Thomas, founder of the *Graphic*, and Mr. Carmichael Thomas, for many years its Editor, their commissions for his illustrated articles enabled him to earn more than £3,000. The *Graphic*, in fact, enabled Harry to undertake much African research work which the parsimony of the Government would not have made possible. He was also a frequent and considered contributor to the fortnightly, monthly and quarterly *Reviews*. W. T. Stead quoted him on many subjects as the decisive authority.

In matters of theory, where his imagination was fired and his prejudices were involved, Harry was sometimes inclined to make brilliant guesses and advance them as hard facts. Nine million and ninety-nine thousand people did not know as much, and accepted them as such. The tenth millionth man reserved his opinion, with a shrug of his shoulders that anyone could dare to be so positive in the present state of our knowledge. A lapse of ten years might, and sometimes did, bring my brother to a substantial modification of his original view. It is very seldom that any chain of evidence is complete in every link, and it never would reach completion if we did not at times resort to a working hypothesis. Harry was an adept himself at discovering workable hypotheses for the building up of theories not yet capable of proof. But

he was somewhat apt to mistake the hypothesis for the proof, while fastening this accusation on 'dogmatists'. I venture to insert these observations here because from 1901 onwards Harry's work tended to become less administrative and more literary and expository. Whatever he wrote was provocative of thought, and often of humour too. His contributions were a frequent ingredient in Sir James Knowles's piquant literary salads in the *Nineteenth Century*. As is well known, Sir James had a flair for interesting expert opinion from men of very widely divergent interests and opinions. It was with something like professional glee that he published in the same number of his broad-minded review, with no restrictions save those of courtesy and fairness, the opinions of a Militarist, a Pacifist, a Positivist, a Jesuit, an Anglican Dean (more daring than his Bishop), an old-fashioned Nonconformist Radical, a Fabian, and a Diehard who meant to live and die too away from his Irish estates. Royalty not infrequently sat at his round table, for at his house Harry met several times the old Duke of Cambridge, of whom he formed a quite different opinion to that entertained by the politicians who had not considered him a suitable head for the British Army. My brother found him a more patient listener and more open-minded to Army reform than Lord Kitchener, whom he also had opportunities of judging.

Harry's opinion of Edwardian literary society was that it did not compare well in solid talent with that of mid and late Victorian times, when he considered that the personal relations between author and publisher were often closer and more friendly, the

publisher being very often himself a writer, and less exclusively a business man. He would instance the brilliantly clever Charles Kegan Paul, founder of the Publishing House of that name in partnership with Alfred Trench, a son of the Archbishop of Dublin. My brother rated very highly Kegan Paul's learning, his lovable character, his influence on English literature and his association with a school of writers in France who, like Kegan Paul himself, had, to Harry's complete puzzlement, abandoned their earlier Agnosticism for the Catholic faith.

To anyone who had been away in the wilds for a considerable period at the end of the last century, it was evident that a great change had come over English Society and public life, synchronizing roughly in time with the reign of King Edward. There were a lot of new people, with new standards, and money counted more. Harry felt the loss of old friends. He lamented the death of Sir Arthur Sullivan at this time. He had not known him for long, but their friendship had ripened quickly, started by my brother telling him how much he loved Sir Arthur's cheery opera. He would play it delightedly, though not particularly well, for his own relaxation, and stoutly maintained that it conferred more benefit on humanity than 'classical stuff'.

I have explained that Harry was not a very sociable being. One reason for his disliking people in the mass was that dinner parties never suited his health, and for that reason he was always glad to get out of London. In the late summer of 1901, Lord de Saumarez, an uncle of Lady Johnston, lent him his

beautiful house and park in Guernsey. Lord de Saumarez, a descendant of Nelson's second in command, had spent much thought and money on beautifying his island estate, and, finding that a river was lacking, had one made!

Despite much talk of democracy the agitation for the broadening of the franchise, the entrenchment of obstinate cliques of officials in one department and another became more and more marked in King Edward's reign to those who saw behind the scenes. Harry went once more to Hatfield in 1901, to find Lord Salisbury relaxing interest in and touch with public affairs. The old lion was dying, and jackals disputed the spoil. Lord Salisbury made one more effort to get Mr. Chamberlain to take my brother into the Colonial Service, but, whether because he differed from him personally, or merely espoused the cause of Cecil Rhodes, Chamberlain would never consent to this. Harry's advance. The Diplomatic Service on the other hand, continued to be blocked by a powerful group of Permanent Officials. 'Remember, Johnston', said one of these when Harry returned from the smiles of Hatfield, '*we* are *always* here.'

The following letter from Lord de Saumarez, not marked private, written on December 10, 1901, illustrates my point so well that I feel I must quote it with names:

'My dear Johnston:

I am sorry that your prospects of obtaining a new post are not more promising. The Office as a body hates the introduction of new blood into the service, and I am not surprised that you find the

officials hostile. I saw Edward Malet last week in Paris, and in talking over sundry changes in the heads of missions, I asked him what he thought you would be likely to get. "Oh," he said, "Johnston does not belong to the Service. I don't think he is likely to get anything." I said that, having been Consul General in Tunis, if you had not gone out to Uganda to meet the wishes of the Government, you would, in the ordinary course of events, have been promoted to be Minister. Satow, I thought, had been promoted from Tunis to be Minister in Siam, and Haggard to Bogotá. He was, however, evidently very jealous of the admission of intruders to the charmed circle. I think it would be most unjust if your acceptance of the Special Mission to Uganda were to disqualify you from further Diplomatic employment. Rather than retire on a pension, *I* should ask to be sent back to Tunis and await promotion from there. Sanderson spoke to me of you in terms of highest praise, saying what a high opinion Lord Salisbury entertained of you. It would be far preferable to be without pay and without pension for even a year than to lose all chance of further employment.

Very sincerely yours,

DE SAUMAREZ.'

It so happened that by either returning to the costly Consulate General of Tunis, where the salary did not cover the expenses, or by living *'en disponsibilité'* in England without any pay or pension Harry would have been putting too great a strain on his very limited private means, having spent on scientific research in Africa considerable sums to which the Government

would not contribute one penny, though from that day to this several of its Protectorates in Africa have benefited financially by his private botanical researches into their resources in rubber, etc. So, as time went on, and no suitable post was offered him, he decided to retire on a pension and devote himself to politics and literature, by which he felt he could serve the Empire as well as by direct administrative work.

He might not have come to this decision so readily if he could have foreseen that his claim to a pension of £670 a year (surely modest enough, compared to that of his friend and colleague, Sir John Kirk, who had held similar posts for the same period of time, and got a pension of £1,337) would be whittled down by the Treasury to one just under £500. They would even have reduced it below that, but that Harry had chanced to keep some document showing that five years previously he was recognized as entitled to more. This unworthy act of meanness towards a man who had repeatedly risked his life and had permanently injured his health in unhealthy climates in order to save the British taxpayer many millions of money by establishing peace and a plentiful revenue, contrasts startlingly with the handsome pensions accorded to politicians who have taken no risks but that of the Ballot. Comparisons in these matters are odious, but it is difficult to avoid making some. A Speaker of the House of Commons has lately been accorded sixfold the pension to that which was considered enough for Harry after nearly dying several times of Black Water Fever, adding more territory to the Empire than any

man of his day, stamping out slavery in Central Africa, and adding immensely to our knowledge of and profits from that continent. The Treasury advanced the astonishing plea that as Harry's last, and best paid, post had been termed a 'Special Commissionership', its speciality meant that it should not count towards the computation of his pension, which was to be estimated from the far lower salary he received in Tunis. Yet Tunis was not apparently to count for him as a step in the Diplomatic Service, as it had been for his predecessors. It was a case of 'Heads, I win; tails, you lose'.

Lord Cranborne, the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, wrote to encourage Harry to come on to the Board of a British Central African Railway Company, which was not really a Government concern at all. This was like the Government's former subterfuge to get round the parsimony of the Treasury by putting themselves and my brother under an obligation to Rhodes for the administrative expenses of part of British Central Africa. So, sooner than accord to a man whom the King had just honoured the alternative of either an adequate pension or a modest Ministry, or recognize that his work had been Colonial in character and should be continued under the Colonial Office, the Government expunged the last five years of his service altogether, and computed his pension and his status from his last post but two, that in British Central Africa. This, though quite as unhealthy as the West African colonies, had for some inexplicable reason a much lower rate of pay and pension attached to it. To complete these arbitrary contrasts, Sir Richard

Wood, retiring from the Tunis Consulate General, was allotted a pension of £2,000 a year. More than the monetary injustice, Harry felt deeply his exclusion from all share in shaping or serving the British Empire when the world seemed leagued against it. After squandering hundreds of millions of pounds by its blunders in South Africa, the Government was acting like other Governments, before and since, in haggling over a debt of honour involving some paltry hundreds of pounds. But to exclude from their Counsellors a man noted for combined economy and efficiency was not even logical, and showed evidence of private spite by which the general public was the loser as well as the intended victim of it.

When Harry's retirement became known, the Press and public at once expressed a desire that he should go into Parliament as a sort of 'Member for Africa'. Harry, though averse to the regular political game, saw in this idea a chance of doing some good work. But he made no immediate preparations for this step while the demand was being voiced and might have been met by the offer of a safe seat from either Party, for he had never declared or determined on his colour in Home politics. But Members were not paid in those days to compensate them for the considerable expense of nursing a constituency and standing for Parliament. And he recognized that as our House of Commons, unlike the French Chamber, does not allow any of its Members to be elected by any of the outer dominions they are to rule, he had first the double task of educating himself in Home problems and of educating the stay-at-home public in the needs and problems of

the Empire. He put his finger at once on its weakest spots, which were internal, and therefore affecting the health of the whole body – Ireland, and the life of the English democracy.

An Arab proverb divides mankind into three classes: 'There are those who know, and know well that they know. Others know not, and know that they don't know. Still others know not, and don't know that they don't know.' In regard to Home politics, Harry classed himself at this period within the second category, and set to work to educate himself, never realizing for a moment that in the selection of particular teachers, books and subjects and the exclusion or but scant notice of others, subconscious prejudice inevitably comes into play with even the most fair-minded and disinterested seeker after truth. How often do I remember his proclaiming eagerly, 'I want to know . . .' and then laying down precisely the lines on which he wanted to be instructed! As a teacher on Africa he was on sure ground, and lectured in all the big cities on its problems to a wider public than he had hitherto reached. But Ireland was his Dark Continent, and when he went to learn there he was as much at the mercy of his hosts as English inquirers are now when they go to study Russia.

It was characteristic of Harry that from first to last he was far more interested in Ireland's pre-historic past than in her recent history and present problems. He set himself to prove how similar in their racial strains, after all, were the peoples of Ireland to those of Great Britain, ignoring the fact that neither logic, self-interest, religion nor blood have much to do with

the birth of and claim to separate nationality. He computed the Irish to be the best looking and healthiest portion of the British race. He admitted, more or less, the justice of their historic grievances. He admitted 'theoretically' the claim to Home Rule, but he did not, in 1902, urge its adoption as the only comprehensive restitution of ill-gotten gains. Instead, he advocated piecemeal reforms bestowed or enforced on the Irish by an alien legislature and largely alien officials, though he admitted the incongruity of the Member for Dover being sent to teach the Irish their business. In trying to be a realist, to get something done by pleasing all parties, he pleased no one in particular. He brought a section of the Conservative Press a shade nearer to Home Rule. He sympathized with that conciliatory Wyndham policy all too soon to be wrecked by the Diehards, and so he came in for much more abuse from the old Ascendency Party than from the Nationalists. Yet he went to the length of deploring that Gladstone had not bought Orange support for land reform by allowing a tiny religious minority in Ireland to remain established at the expense of the great majority. Even this did not win for him the approval of that amusing novelist, Canon Hannay – 'George Birmingham' – who made one of his characters call a touring Englishman, thinly disguised as 'Sir John Harrison', 'a damned fool'. It is to be doubted if any other Englishman of the day escaped that charge in Ireland, and, rather bitterly, Harry came to acknowledge that it is a thankless task to mind other people's business, and foolish indeed to intervene in their quarrels. To the end of his life he considered the

Irish, of all parties, the most perverse of people. Nobody but Ulstermen supported his plea for a submarine tunnel connecting Scotland with North-East Ireland, and even they pointed out that the railway gauge, like everything else, was different on opposite sides of the Irish Sea, and that tourists wishing to see the beautiful south-west of Ireland without seasickness would have to first travel all the way up to Scotland before they got half-way there. Nor were Harry's eulogies of the colour of Ireland sufficiently potent to attract any but the bravest of tourists; for he counterbalanced them by lurid accounts of his sufferings from Irish fleas, and a grave proposal that bears, wolves and other wild animals once indigenous to Ireland should be reintroduced to make the country more interesting. Irish humorists drew merry cartoons of Bruin embracing the pig, but no one thought the fleas at all funny, and men and women of all parties wrote to the Press to say that Sir Harry Johnston must have brought them with him. It was a most irritating subject to have introduced. The Irish Press burst into angry headlines, such as 'Sir Harry Johnston's Fleas', and opened heavy fire with 'This Grand Cross person', etc., etc. One cannot help thinking that they were the grand cross people.

At a lively political meeting, Mr. W. T. Russell, M.P., is reported to have said:

'Sir Harry Johnston is a very able man, but I suppose that the *Graphic* who commissioned him went on the principle that if they were going to get the real thing they had better commission a man who knew nothing about it. This is always the way in which

England proceeds to govern us. . . .' Unfortunately, at this point in Mr. Russell's speech the drums and fifes of a rival meeting turned up, and 'the turmoil was so great that Mr. Russell's voice could scarcely be heard.'

Almost as irritating as the fleas was Harry's specific for assuaging religious bitterness in Ireland: a close time for hell fire, the Pope and King William, and a completely new calendar of saints. He annoyed Presbyterians by quoting their printed headings for a Pleasant Sunday address: 'Eternal Punishment – What is Death? – The Lake of Fire – Burning with Brimstone – For Ever and Ever.' The Catholics were not gratified to be told that they supported their pastors as a sort of Fire Insurance, or that they should canonize Guinness, which was a bit inconsistent, since one of the principal evils Harry discovered in Ireland was too much Guinness, where whiskey was not a worse one. He was on less debatable ground when he deplored the neglect of forestry and fruit growing in Ireland, and when I was myself touring the few poor little apple-growing areas a few years later I found that in the South they recalled Harry with respect and liking, but looked upon him in the light of a more than usually intelligent foreigner. The Home Rule sentiments I made bold to send to *The Times* did not, however, make me any less foreign in their eyes. Even when he had just trodden on their tenderest corns they admitted guardedly that he was 'not without the instincts of a gentleman', which I believe in Ireland is considered next door to enthusiastic praise of an opponent.

Harry was probably the only Englishman sent to deal with the political affairs of Ireland who has thought it worth while to make a serious study of the Irish language. Master of a hundred African tongues, he confessed himself baffled by Irish, because whereas, by the system he has largely helped to evolve, African speech is written phonetically in Roman characters. Irish has an alphabet of its own, of which 'four letters are so much alike that it is difficult for even practised readers to distinguish them rapidly with the eye'. 'Others are entirely altered,' he remarks, 'by aspiration – not that they *are* aspirated in the real meaning of the word. Some are a mere extravagance – never pronounced at all. Most are pronounced entirely unlike their supposed English equivalents. Dh has nothing to do with D. It merely has a subtle power of corrupting all vowels anywhere near it. For a nothing, an S changes into Sh or is silent. As a letter it is always ashamed of itself in Irish and leaves the sentence for any one of three hundred reasons. G is the bully of the alphabet; it upsets everything it touches, and the student shudders at its approach. Any vowel may be pronounced like any other vowel than itself; no unaccented diphthong is sounded like a diphthong. What the Gaelic Leaguer loves is to write a tripthong, then put a dh or a gh, then inscribe another tripthong, and finally to pronounce the whole seven letters as the simple "i" sound in "ravine". That is thought to be *very* classical.' Lest the Pot should be thought to be calling the Kettle black, I may mention that by the time Harry had written the above in a book called *Views and Reviews* (Williams & Norgate)

in 1912 he was also foremost as an advocate of English spelling reform.

But no eccentricity of English spelling, apparently, is rooted in the grammatical structure of the language, as Harry maintained was the case in Irish. 'There are nineteen different ways of forming the plural nominative', he remarks plaintively. 'The genitive has literally uncounted juggleries; I have learnt thirty-four ways of forming it up to date. Prepositions have a dread power over pronouns, and every preposition insists on shaping every one of the six luckless pronouns to its own liking. If you leave out one preposition from your calculations, it comes in like the overlooked bad fairy, and spoils everything. Just fancy if the English pronoun "us" became bus, cuss, fuss, dussy, jus, hus, pruss and so forth, according to each preposition that liked to interfere! But if you want to go mad, try and wrestle with the "consuetudinal past" of verbs.' This sounds discouraging, but I cannot help thinking that if our German grammars had been written for us with a like admixture of humour when we were young, we should have found them more interesting.

Harry, while applauding part of the aims and labour of the Gaelic Leaguers, accused them of 'a policy of holy obscurantism, saying in rage against the horrid, unsympathetic Saxon, "We don't *want* to make our language easy to you, or modern in any sense".' He dubbed this a policy of the Latest Stone Age. While a keen advocate of the preservation of racial types, manners and languages, and disliking intensely a sycophantic Anglomania on the part of other

peoples, he was equally against an exclusive attitude of Sinn Fein in any country. He wanted a greater Union Jack of black, white and yellow, and neither orange nor green as symbols of isolation or discord. Speaking to the Anglo-African Club at this time, he said: 'The time is passing when forty millions of white people will be able to keep down 350 millions in India and millions in Africa.' But he never thought that in our time either India or Africa could dispense with the white man's guidance. Only, he preferred that that guidance should be exercised where possible through native rulers and without the obliteration of anything good in native life.

That was one of the aims of the African Society which Harry helped to found and administer at this time. To keep it in its proper sphere, especially in the selection of matter for its always interesting quarterly Journal, Harry had to battle against some who wished to make it a channel for their political and personal likes and dislikes, or in other ways weaken its scientific character and usefulness. He was three times President of this now flourishing Society, and devoted a good deal of time to its affairs, being instrumental in establishing its offices appropriately at the Imperial Institute. When I edited its Journal under his supervision, I used to notice that even in the heat of a political campaign he would reserve the fiercest fires of his wrath for some well meaning contributor who persisted in a faulty spelling of African names, and he would put aside well paid work for a long disquisition on this subject. No framer or opponent of the Athanansian Creed was more intolerant of contrary

opinions than Harry in African and Arab orthography. Anyone who spelt Muhammadan in any other way but this was anathema to him. He was instrumental in establishing against all backsliders a consistent system of writing native African words and place names phonetically, pronouncing the vowels of the Roman alphabet as in Italian and the consonants as in rational English, with a few symbols added for the transcription of clicks and nasal and guttural sounds in some native languages.

The following letter from Sir Apolo Kagwa, Prime Minister of Uganda, only one out of many he received for years from native African friends, and written originally in Swahili, will show that Harry's interest in Africa was not just dryly scientific. Though he inveighed against the sentimentality of the earlier Negrophils, some of whom invaded the African Society, he was truly a friend of black men:

'Sir,

How are you, my friend? I am writing to tell you that I arrived safely in Uganda. Many people came to hear what I had to tell of England, how the people were like locusts in numbers, how big London was, what the Houses of Parliament were like, and the Coronation; how I saw the King in his house, and how you received us kindly into your house and we ate with you and saw your wife, and how you took us to see the animals. All this I told my friends, and the Baganda thank you very much for being so kind to us. I want to send my son, Blasius Kagwa, to England, to be taught in Cambridge.

Good-bye. May the God of grace preserve you.
Your faithful servant,

APOLO, KATIKIRO.'

The 'animals' the Katikiro was taken to see were in the Zoo, where I am afraid he was regarded as much as a spectacle as the lions, whom he and his friend Ham saluted delightedly by slapping their thighs and exclaiming Wa! Ham was also taken to a dance, and wrote a book, in which he noted how shocked his Central African modesty was by the dress and demeanour of the dancers. We must be thankful he was spared seeing more modern dances and less dress.

At this period there was an interregnum in the government of the Zoo, and Harry was directing its affairs. It seemed appropriate, because it had been his great place of pilgrimage for study when he was only fourteen, and now the Zoological Society conferred on him its Gold Medal and Cambridge University an Hon. Doctorate of Science for his Natural History discoveries, affording undergraduates opportunity for facetiousness when he went up to hear the Latin oration setting forth the finding of the Okapi. The Duke of Bedford wanted Harry to take over the managership of the Zoo for good, but as the son of his old friend Dr. Sclater was one of the candidates for the post, and another very able zoologist, Dr. P. Chalmers Mitchell, was also competing, my brother was content to keep the ring and carry out some very necessary reforms in the personnel and management of the Gardens until the Council had elected its officers. Harry always advocated extending the area

of the Zoo and opening it to the general public on Sundays; or, better still, its amalgamation with Regent's Park, entirely free to the public, like the Museums, by means of an educational Government subsidy. Paving the way for reforms at the Zoo was one of the reasons which impelled him to take a house within sound of the lions. This should have made him feel at home, but London always gave him claustophobia. I used to walk with him through the Gardens at night time when they had been closed to the general public, for he wished to get familiar with a number of shy creatures which are nocturnal in their habits. In the studio at the back of his house in Chester Terrace he was still painting animal pictures for the Academy, and was simultaneously dictating and illustrating a book on British Mammals. For this last he would make excursions into the quieter parts of the country. Sometimes we would bicycle out the whole way from his house on a Sunday. His observation of the diminishing wild life of Britain started him on a passionate, at times almost frenzied, campaign for its preservation, together with the natural and anciently cultivated beauty of landscape associated with it. He went far beyond the most fervent adherents of the never-sufficiently-known Selborne Society, in that he advocated not only the preservation of our existing fauna but the re-introduction of animals some of us would rather not meet on a walk.

There was only room in his London quarters for Harry to offer hospitality to a modest mongoose. Feeling the English winter chilly, this engaging little animal would sit on the hearthrug warming its

stomach and dreaming of snakes. A great lady, with very decided views and a fondness for expressing them with decision was on one occasion standing on this hearthrug and speaking to a drawing-room audience as though from a platform. She was too interested in her discourse to notice that she had a mongoose as Chairman. I suppose it looked like part of the hearthrug. Those were the days of long skirts, which suited Mr. Mongoose very well. When the great lady had reached the height of her eloquence, he remarked that her voluminous silk petticoat looked invitingly warm and comfy; so he very stealthily crept near, and then suddenly climbed up under it. Nobody had noticed him, and everyone was electrified when the dignified speaker jumped high into the air, waltzed round frantically, shaking herself, and emitted piercing screams.

CHAPTER XI

In 1902 Cecil Rhodes died, and in 1903 my brother was in the Abbey for the funeral of another great statesman – Lord Salisbury. Lord Cranborne, with whom Harry had had official relations at the Foreign Office, in taking his father's title, vacated his Parliamentary seat at Rochester, and the Liberals of that City at once asked Harry to stand as their candidate at the ensuing bye-election. He was encouraged to do so by no less a person than Sir Alfred Harmsworth (as he then was), who, at a private luncheon party convened for the occasion, promised him the support of the *Daily Mail*. This may seem surprising in view of the Conservative politics of that paper and my brother's decision to stand as a Liberal. But both Harry and the great Harmsworth were really Cross Bench men, with independent minds, who never in their heart of hearts subscribed to our ridiculous English system of tying up opinions on a number of unrelated questions into bundles which aspirants to political life must take all together, like a job lot of things at an auction.

The future Lord Northcliffe was true to his word. To give my brother a good journalistic backing, he chose Philip Gibbs, not yet a knight of the pen, but always the most knightly of men, already at that time great in journalism, and growing in literary fame.

There was a former Conservative majority of about five hundred to pull down at Rochester, and it seemed

worth trying. But only when Harry had committed himself did he realize that the local Liberal organization was utterly unprepared, and had to be built up in a few days. Removals had not been traced, and no steps had been taken for years to nurse the constituency in the Liberal interest.

One of the factors which decided my brother to try his political fortune at Rochester was his early connection with that city and neighbourhood. He still had relations there, Mayors of the City in two generations, growing locally the best fruit and hops, and interested in brewing the good Kentish ale. Their farm had been almost a second home to him in his youth.

Kentish people are intensely local in feeling, and from that point of view the Conservatives had chosen the stronger man. Their candidate, Mr. Charles Tuff, was a powerfully built, bull-necked, jovial, red-faced business man whose life's interests had been bound up with the important local cement trade which Harry had accurately accused of blasting the landscape for miles up the Medway. The most beautiful things in Mr. Tuff's eyes were his barges, plying up and down that broad waterway, and flying his colours, and the belching factory chimneys which were blackening the stonework of the Cathedral and the Castle ruins. His headquarters were at the old Bull Inn of Dickens fame, where I lodged in an oak-beamed bedroom above the convivial henchmen of the enemy, a witness to scenes as typical of Rochester and old-time elections as any which Dickens portrayed. The number of healths drunk to Charlie Tuff, and the complete lack

of interest shown in the Empire's affairs by the local 'Imperialist' Party argued ill for Harry's success. But there were other sides to Rochester in the grey old Cathedral, with such celebrities attached to it as Canon Chene and Dean Hole of floral fame. Some of the Cathedral clergy were Liberals, and some were Free Trade Conservatives, who considered my brother a better Imperialist than Chamberlain.

This was the first election fought on Chamberlain's new Protection issue, the first challenge to Free Trade since the days of Peel, and there were many cross currents. It was greatly to Mr. Tuff's advantage that his homely, unpolitical past spoke for him; for, being no speaker, and still less of a writer, he never committed himself on this question which was sharply dividing his own leaders, Chamberlain and Balfour, and is likely to cause divisions among the world's best thinkers still.

Now it so happened that Harry had toyed with Imperial Preference before Chamberlain, and in writing had displayed a perfectly open mind on the matter. When he came to live in London and began to study its social conditions, however, he came to the conclusion that for Great Britain, as things are now, Free Trade was on the whole the best policy. This did not please fanatics on either side. His earlier written views, propounding some sort of fiscal stimulus to Imperial cotton growing, remained, and were made effective use of by professional speakers from the Midlands, champions of Chamberlain at his zenith, when he had changed every single political opinion he had once held.

The South African Labour problem was already becoming a live issue. A few months earlier, Mr. Chamberlain, in a speech at Johannesburg, had turned down Harry's solution of this labour problem for the Mines, which was improved rail communication between Central and South Africa, and the indenture of Central Africans, rather than the importation of Chinese. Subsequent events have proved Harry's solution the right one. But for some reason, the *Daily News* attacked it almost as fiercely as the alternative of Chinese labour. So that this election produced the singular spectacle of the Liberal candidate being supported by the *Daily Mail,* while the *Daily News* first damned him with faint praise, and finally attacked him.

My brother's Imperial views were commending him to moderate men of all parties at Rochester, as did also his anticipation of Campbell-Bannerman's statesmanlike conciliation of the conquered Boers, by granting them local self-government. He had agreed with Mr. Tuff to fight the election good-humouredly, and was making headway by a judicial and courteous attitude, when there descended on the Cathedral City in the guise of his ally that fiery old cleric, Dr. Clifford, who dominated at the time the professedly anti-clerical Liberal leaders.

In one day he completely wrecked the chances Harry had of participating from Westminster in the settlement of South Africa. He pulled out two sticks from the arbitrarily bound bundle of Liberal shibboleths and proceeded to bludgeon friendly or neutral voters right and left with them.

Because of their interest in brewing, he attacked my brother's personal friends – people who were either themselves Liberals, or who would not, for old acquaintance sake, have voted against Harry, and represented them as debauching the people. The result was that some of them found it difficult to work for Harry, whilst others – and those the most powerful section – became strenuous supporters of Tuff, and my brother had the mortification of seeing his own cousins flash by, sporting the Conservative scarlet.

Not content with spoiling Harry's chances among the Brewing interest, Dr. Clifford next alienated more numerous sections of the electors. As a candidate my brother attracted a considerable proportion of the Cathedral clergy. Among them were scholars of world-wide interests and reputation. To such, Harry's varied achievements commended him independently of any Party label. As a Liberal, he should have been able to count on the Irish vote, which in a dockside population can easily turn the scale.

But Dr. Clifford reserved his fiercest epithets for the Elementary and Secondary schools which the generosity of Anglicans and Roman Catholics had saved the rest of the community the expense of building. While demanding continued universal support from the Rates for the religious syllabus of Council schools he himself approved of, Dr. Clifford claimed martyrdom, without any of the martyr's meekness, when the meanest approach to reciprocity was expected of him, and launched a campaign of persecution, embittered by virulent abuse, to compel the supporters of the Voluntary schools – pioneers in the education of the

poor – to bear the whole of their own burden and half of his as well: *i.e.*, to be penalized for their religious opinions. Mr. Birrell, who was to meet with disaster when the Board of Education was delivered over to his mittened fist of mail, foreshadowed his Cromwellian creed by announcing that 'Minorities must suffer'. Liberal Churchmen at Rochester decided that such a dictum was treachery to true Liberalism. Hundreds of poor Irish artisans whose pennies had built their schools but could not support the whole of the increasing burden of their upkeep besides contributing through the Rates to other people's educational preferences, sacrificed even their national aspirations for Home Rule, and voted Conservative in self-defence. Cabinet Ministers and many skilled hired speakers hastened to Rochester to support Mr. Tuff, but he owed the majority of 519 which he secured to the eloquence of Dr. Clifford. Lest it be thought that this is only my personal opinion, I will quote that of a Rochester elector, signing himself 'Liberal Churchman', whose identity we had little doubt of. Writing to the *Daily News,* he said:

> 'It is to be hoped that our Liberal candidates will learn, from the experience of Sir Harry Johnston, the futility of laying themselves out for the support of the "Church Association" and its noisily feeble clique of "Protestantism-before-Politics" faddists. By accepting the shibboleth of these people, Sir Harry Johnston alienated a considerable body of Liberal Churchmen who would otherwise have given him their energetic support and – as the result proved – gained absolutely nothing whatever

in the way of compensating advantage. Nothing but loss can result from such disastrous attempts to identify Liberalism with the views of a handful of illiberal fanatics, whose ruling idea is to penalize and persecute all those whose conception of ecclesiastical doctrine and practice is not identical with their own.'

It was really almost as farcical for his 'friends' to proclaim Harry as 'the Protestant candidate' as for his opponents to call him the Little Englander, and untravelled Mr. Tuff the Imperialist, since my brother's concern for Sixteenth Century Strife was in inverse proportion to his interest in the Empire.

When Sunday brought a nominal truce, his Election Agent – a Jew, I believe – certainly thought it good tactics that Harry should attend the Cathedral service in the morning (the other candidate was 'doing it'!) and a Nonconformist chapel in the evening. After this gesture, it was considered 'safe' for him to give the Irish a secular Sunday night magic lantern lecture on their own country. Still smarting with the No Popery polemics of Dr. Clifford, the sons of Erin attended this entertainment in a coldly critical spirit. Harry had snatched a few hours between his unaccustomed religious exercises to complete his book on British Mammals, and when the time arrived for him to address some soothing mixture for the Irish of Rochester he had seemingly forgotten all about the impending election. He had just finished writing 'Man is the commonest mammal in the British Islands to-day, with the doubtful exception of the long-tailed field mouse.' Proceeding now to embroider

on that statement, as though thinking aloud, he left the century of cement, and wandered into the Stone Age, to the complete mystification of his Dockside audience. With a smile of triumph, he threw upon the screen a snapshot he had taken of a type of Irish peasant rarely met with outside the pages of *Punch* – prognathous, long-lipped, almost prick-eared. 'Here is a modern example,' he continued enthusiastically, 'of that interesting ape-like race which reached Ireland some thirty thousand years ago.' He was not allowed to pursue the thread of his discourse. It was snapped by violent explosions of wrath from those members of his audience who imagined that they at last understood what he was 'getting at'.

'Ould Oirland niver knew an ape, Sorr!' shouted one angry navvy, and after that no very coherent opinions could be heard in the clamour. The face of Harry's Election Agent during this lecture was a study in dismay and final despair.

Mr. W. T. Stead, of the *Review of Reviews,* who supported Harry's Rochester campaign against 'Blastus' (Chamberlain) with all the fervent loyalty to a friend of which his large-hearted nature was capable, was none the less immensely tickled by his droll recital of his discomfiture in his first essays at reaching the soul and suffrage of the British working classes. Afraid lest his humour might have been misconstrued, my brother wrote to him at this time (October 1, 1903):

> 'I cannot endure to have it thought that I am laughing at the working man, or merely posing as his friend or champion just to get into Parliament.

I *am* a working man, and his ideals are very much mine if he has received a little better education than the Rochester coal shippers. The Liberal and the Labour Parties *must* work together. I have of course been fighting "Blastus" at Rochester rather than Tuff.'

Harry proceeded to a more detached study of mankind as soon as Rochester had declared its preference for Tuff. I doubt if he ever noticed the exultant 'Tuff Enough' heading on Conservative newspaper placards on the morrow of the poll as our train puffed out of the station. He was pondering the problems of the latest Ice Age and the manner of the coming of Neolithic man to the Medway when it and the Thames were affluents of the Rhine. He remembered, however, to dine with his late antagonist very pleasantly in the House of Commons a few weeks later. Their personal relations had been cordial, from the moment when they first shook hands at the beginning of the contest to Harry's congratulatory little speech at its close.

My brother's election speeches had, as a matter of fact, made more impression in the country at large than at Rochester. There was mooted a coalition between Free Trade Conservatives and Imperialist Liberals at that time, and Harry, after the disappointing result of the Rochester poll, was encouraged to pursue a political career by cordial letters from a number of people who did not want to be identified with either *laissez-faire* Little Englandism on the one hand or, on the other with an advanced Protectionist policy which might give a handle to potential enemies of our Empire.

There was a chance of his having at one time a fairly good electoral opening in Yorkshire. He would have more easily won popularity in Scotland. But being a comparatively poor man, he had to seek a constituency in London which he could 'nurse' without neglecting his everyday work there. Accordingly he accepted the invitation of the West Marylebone Liberals to contest that constituency against Sir Samuel Scott, a Guardsman turned Banker, who held it by a very large majority in the Conservative interest.

But a General Election was not then contemplated, and Africa claimed his attention once more. With the encouragement of the Foreign Office, he had accepted the directorship of two British Companies formed to develop the very great, but latent, natural resources in rubber and minerals of Liberia.

Even now, this independent Negro republic on the West Coast has been scarcely explored in parts of its densely forested interior. Only its seaboard is sparsely colonized by repatriated Negroes from the United States and the British West Indies who began their backward trek across the Atlantic about a century ago. They have never increased greatly in numbers, owing to the fact that a civilized life and residence in the healthier New World had rendered them almost as susceptible to African fevers as white men. The extravagantly tropical forests of Liberia harbour such interesting animal rarities as the Pygmy hippopotamus, and for this reason held a special lure for the discoverer of the Okapi. More dangerous, but quite as attractive to Harry on account of their languages,

were the savage indigenous Negroes, many of whom were still undisguised cannibals. Indeed, it was said at this time that cannibalism lingered within fifteen miles of the capital, Monrovia, where the little oligarchy of Americo-Liberians clung with exact and pathetic mimicry to the outward trappings of an alien civilization, modelling their clothes, constitution and school curriculum on those of the United States a generation ago.

Imitation may be the sincerest flattery, but it is not always the most pleasing. America seemed at the time to have lost interest in its step-children, though in the first half of the nineteenth century American philanthropists did much to justify the name of Liberia by making it a home for freed Negroes whose ancestors in an evil age had been brought as slaves from Africa to a land which should never have known slavery or sable skins. As this crime against Christianity had been begun by Elizabethan Englishmen of the much-lauded Drake and Hawkins type, it was fitting that Britain should be the pioneer of the Anti-Slavery campaign of better times and take a benevolent interest in Liberia, whose frontier on one side adjoins that of Sierra Leone, also a settlement of freed slaves. It was plainly our interest, as well as our duty, to safeguard the independence of Liberia. In Harry's estimation, it was seriously threatened. He detected a tendency on the part of France not to recognize as effective the purely nominal government of the inland tribes along the French frontier by the few thousand English-speaking Negroes on the coast, who looked forever westward, to their American Egypt, and took but little intelli-

gent interest in the natural resources of their Promised Land.

The British Companies which proposed to develop Liberia wanted someone of standing with its Government and that of France to undertake diplomatic negotiations, and pressed Harry to accept the post. Lord Lansdowne in several interviews did the same. So my brother found himself once more engaged in administrative and diplomatic work in connection with Africa, without the necessity of breaking with a political career at home; or so it appeared at first, at any rate. His economical handling of the finances of African Protectorates also commended him to business men, as well as his special knowledge of rubber-bearing trees and vines and other tropical products.

It was necessary for him to make several visits to Paris to negotiate with the French Government, and to go three times to and through Liberia. By patient negotiation with the Liberian Government and its President and by judicious purchase from German rivals, Harry steadily extended and consolidated British interests in these curious backwaters of West Africa in such a way as to improve the finances and efficiency of the Black Republic and so fortify it against French aggression. President Barclay of Liberia was from first to last his friend, and constantly consulted him, at Monrovia and at the Foreign Office, in Lord Lansdowne's presence, or in that of other Foreign Office officials at Harry's home in the country. In these interviews it was arranged that the Liberian Government should enlist British officials as Customs House officers, as the Chinese Government had once

done. To fortify Liberia against French threats on its undefined frontier, a Police Force was organized and commanded by British officers. A British-commanded gunboat became the nucleus of the Liberian Navy. Mr. (Sir) Austin Chamberlain as well as Lord Lansdowne supported Harry in these measures so long as they remained in office.

But the French scented the creation of a second Egypt, and when Sir Edward Grey succeeded Lord Lansdowne at the Foreign Office in 1906 they demanded as a concession to the Entente that Harry's schemes should no longer receive British Government backing. We know how Sir Edward Grey (as he was then) offended and alarmed the Persian Government by jeopardizing its independence and the British collaboration which was defending it against Russian intrigue because he wished to stand well with the ally of France. In like manner he refused to exert himself on behalf of Liberia and the two British Companies there for fear of imperilling the Entente. Political capital was made in Monrovia of this sudden withdrawal of British support. The Liberian Government in one of its all too frequent elections changed its personnel and its views as well. It annulled or failed to make operative the concessions which would have enabled the British Companies under Harry's control to play a great and beneficent part in the development of the country, so that ultimately they failed politically. Their financial operations also suffered, mainly from this cause, after having offered great promise of success. The truth was that the Liberian Government could not police the interior of its country itself, and would

not let others do so, so that where there was most promise of wealth in diamonds, gold and especially rubber there was also the greatest difficulty and danger in exploiting it.

In his scientific and richly illustrated book on Liberia, Harry incidentally threw light on the human element which frustrated and disappointed his hopes. The real rulers of the interior of Liberia were the cannibals before alluded to. On the higher reaches of the Cavalla River, Harry found them industrious agriculturists and road makers in the forest clearings. He hazarded the opinion that their lust for human flesh and its salt blood may have originated by their being hemmed in by forest barriers and unable to reach the coast and its source of natural salt.

But sheer devilry only can explain a ghastly incident of which he was told and makes mention in his book on Liberia. A tribe between the Cavalla and the St. Paul rivers captured a woman with her child. They secured the child in the village stocks and killed the woman. They then 'cooked her flesh in the hot embers of a big fire and feasted on it, staying the child's crying by giving it freshly grilled morsels of its mother's flesh, which the poor baby ate quite unknowingly'. Yet these people were civilized enough to take a hot bath in their houses on returning home from work, and made a kind of soap from the lye of the leaves and bark of a saponaceous tree.

Harry found traces here of a still more revolting type of cannibalism which he had previously noticed all down the eastern side of Africa, *i.e.*, the disinterring of corpses in an advanced state of decomposition

in order to devour them, cooked or raw. This was done at night by secret societies of witches or sorcerers who believed that they could acquire preternatural powers by this horrible practice. They certainly did acquire a morbid taste for putrifying human flesh. They assembled at night in the burial grounds, which are always in the forest, and usually on islands, and there enacted their ghoulish ritual. Harry remarked that there was always something very ghastly about these forest burying grounds – 'a faintly fœtid smell, and diabolically lush vegetation, and the furtive presence of nasty birds, beasts and insects.'

The failure of Sir Edward Grey to back his schemes for a British-assisted Liberia was a peculiarly bitter blow to Harry. He had latterly refused any Director's remuneration for his administrative work on behalf of the two British Liberian Companies, feeling that their shareholders had been 'let down' by Government officials both in England and in Liberia. Incidentally, he was also a heavy loser by the depreciation of his monetary holding in concerns which would have been a thoroughly sound investment but for the uncertain human element – civilized, would-be civilized, and gastronomically barbarous.

It was an irony of fate that the advent to power of the famous Liberal Foreign Secretary in the 'Landslide' General Election of December, 1905, should have wrecked not only Harry's last bit of administrative work in Africa – as his Cameroons, Kilimanjaro and Cape to Cairo embryo Protectorates had been wrecked by other timid politicians – but also his chance of sitting as a Liberal in Parliament. The election came so

suddenly that it surprised him in the wilds of Liberia. He cabled encouragement from its surf-swept shores to his wife and friends who were working strenuously on his behalf. But, on track of his elusive El Dorado, he must have felt very aloof from the kid glove controversies of West Marylebone. He had just ascertained that when his rubber collectors in the interior vanished – and the promised supply of rubber with them – it was because they had been cooked and eaten, their hands and feet being esteemed special delicacies by local epicures.

Yet when in England Harry had worked hard to make himself acquainted with the social conditions of those whom he hoped to represent. He was amazed to find so much positive slumdom – in those days – so near Hyde Park, and was moved to pity and indignation by the abject poverty and ugliness of these mean streets. The people got to call him 'Little Harry', and gave him often the kindest welcome when he visited their homes. Sir Samuel Scott, his opponent, being a wealthy man and a generous one, was able, within the law, to subsidize largely the local charities, clubs and clinics. The West Marylebone poor did not know the difference betwen Liberia and Siberia, but someone put it about that 'Little Harry' was raking up gold and diamonds in 'furrin parts'. A man of moderate means, standing as a Liberal, is, in such a constituency, apt to get ground between the upper and nether millstones of Conservative wealth and Socialist distrust. Very few knew the unobtrusive good he did manage to do in cases of distress without contravening the bribery Act or the anonymity which differentiates charity from

self-advertisement. I am reminded of one instance in particular, where a poor woman told him she had not had a holiday for years. He lost no time in using a friend's name as the supposed donor of his own money to send the poor soul to the seaside for a longer holiday than she had ever had in her life.

We worked with most varied elements in West Marylebone. As at Rochester, Dr. Clifford came bustling in, like the proverbial bull in the china shop, but a metropolitan constituency took him far less seriously than a provincial one. The bulk of the clergy who did the hardest work in the mean streets, such as Father James Adderley and his brother, and the Rev. Russell Wakefield (afterwards a bishop) were Liberals of a truer kind than Dr. Clifford, and were not to be frightened from the side of social reform by the fiery doctor's attempt to penalize their schools. The Irish were all friendly here under the leadership of Alderman Anglim, a great wit. No absent-minded allusion to 'the interesting ape-like colonists of Post-Glacial Ireland' spoilt our harmony, as at Rochester. Only once did our candidate seem for a moment to forget the nature of his audience. I do not think he ever nerved himself to kiss an elector's baby, but he set out to do the next best thing – to give an entertaining talk about Africa to a number of Sunday School children, shepherded by a Nonconformist pastor interested in missionary work. His talk was enlivened by a number of magic lantern slides made from his own photographs. By accident, some pictures from a batch which he had last exhibited at the Anthropological Institute got mixed up with the scenic, zoological and edifying mis-

sionary slides which alone he had intended to exhibit to those of tender years. As the pictures thrown on the magic lantern screen were life-size, the juvenile spectators in those unsophisticated pre-Cinema days watched with rather more than polite interest the changing slides which illustrated the lecturer's talk. Suddenly a huge Negro, in the pride of his manhood – and nothing else – was thrown on the sheet. There was an awful pause, till the Minister with great presence of mind exclaimed 'Praise the Lord! Praise *all* his wondrous works!'

The end of the West Marylebone fight while our candidate was regretfully turning his back on some unscaled mountains in the interior of Liberia (said to be the highest in inner West Africa) was the reduction of the Conservative majority to about a fifth of its former figure.

Dr. P. Chalmers-Mitchell, who was reforming the Zoo and thus worked and lived near Harry's London house and studio at 27, Chester Terrace, Regent's Park, in West St. Pancras, offered to back him for that constituency, where the hostile majority was much smaller. But that chance, and the Liberal candidature for the University of London, he declined with thanks. Purely Party politics had not enough reality to him to attract more than a part of his energies, and he was beginning to feel doubtful whether either his health or his pocket would stand the strain of a sitting member and its deprivation of a country life for which he yearned. If he had got into Parliament he would probably have found himself in much the same position as Mr. Amery at the present moment – respected

and somewhat feared by experts in Foreign and Colonial affairs, but not the sort of stuff which the Party politicians are looking for. Words written recently of Mr. Amery in the Press strike me as most applicable to my brother during his brief incursion into Home politics:

> 'It is a pity that his personality is not more endowed with the gesture of a Joseph Chamberlain, for he has that within him which would stir our politics. He could make them interesting, romantic, bitter, anything but what they are. What lacks? If instead of that vigorous little body, made taut by mountaineering, he were tall, sinuous and pallid; if for that voice slightly alto he could command a depth and organic volume, then he would be able not only to climb mountains, but to move them.'

But out of Parliament, and in comparative retirement, Harry came more and more to be assigned the rôle by general consent of the Member for Africa.

In his efforts to be strictly fair and judicial, he found himself appealed to and quoted by both sides of the Congo Reform controversy. It will be remembered that he had visited the Congo Free States at its inception, and had entered its easternmost province when the first murmurs of there being something wrong in its Administration had arisen. We never saw anything wrong in the particular districts we visited; on the contrary, they were admirably governed by devoted officials. But these parts were not in the Domaine Privé of King Leopold and his financial associates. In this vast Congo State, as large as British India, there was at that time great diversity of administration, and

hence most contradictory comments. Gradually, however, Harry came to accept the adverse reports of Baptist missionaries and the Jesuit Father Vermeersch as collected and circulated by Mr. E. D. Morel as being substantially true of a considerable portion of the Congo State. At this stage it was reported in the Press that the Congo Administration was contemplating offering him the post of Governor-General of the Congo Free State, which had been first held by Stanley when Harry visited him on the Congo in the early 'Eighties. Private letters written to Harry at this time from our Minister at Brussels and Mr. H. R. Fox-Bourne, Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Society, plainly suggested that King Leopold hoped to secure the services of the man to whom he had shown marked attentions when he was only a wandering artist in 1883. But King Leopold withdrew this 'feeler' after Harry had written a preface to a fiery book by Mr. E. C. Morel, of which work the *Daily Express* remarked:

> 'Sir Harry in African matters speaks as one having authority, while Mr. Morel himself is apt to weaken his case in the mind of the judicious by the lyrical intensity of his indignation.'

It was just this 'lyrical intensity' on the part of well-meaning enthusiasts, little or not at all acquainted with Africa, which made Harry very cautious of espousing their cause. He was rather shy of Sir Roger Casement, who was commissioned by our Government to inquire into these matters on the spot, because Sir Roger was a typical Irishman, and intensely emotional. Before seeing him himself, Harry requested me to

interview him. I confess I took an instant liking to him, but was struck by the contrast between his normally gentle and melancholy manner and the fury which made his dark eyes blaze almost with madness when he talked of the Congo in particular or oppression in general. Sir Roger was already at loggerheads with our Government because, while criticizing the work of King Leopold's international tools and associates, it was careful of the susceptibilities of the Belgian people and Parliament, which had then no control over the Congo State. Harry at once proposed that the huggermugger, semi-private, and largely cosmopolitan Congo Government should be replaced by an Administration directly controlled by the Belgian Government, as apart from King Leopold. But in his ideals for true Liberalism at home and abroad he seemed to be perpetually dogged by the irrepressible Dr. Clifford, who had a positive mania for seeing 'Rome' on the wrong side of everything. The worthy Doctor's diatribes were so offensive to the religious susceptibilities of Catholics as to drive many of them into an attitude of reserve, and some few into a foolish attempt to partially whitewash the far from model monarch of Belgium. The Duke of Norfolk, who had written to me privately agreeing to come on to the Council of the Congo Reform Association, withdrew, but Lord Ripon and Lord Clifford of Chudleigh continued to speak in Parliament on behalf of Harry's middle course of reform through direct Belgian control, while agreeing that the kernel of the mischief was that the natives' proprietary rights in their own country had been absolutely ignored. Harry instanced

something like a hundred Belgians of distinction, unconnected with the Concessionnaire Companies, who had accomplished great feats of bravery, conciliation and instruction. The unselfishness of these men and the remarkable results of their work, he thought, were better realized in Belgium than the bad results arising from the personal policy of King Leopold in his Reserves, where, as the French Fathers bitterly complained, 'everything is taxed but fever.' 'If it were realized in Belgium,' he wrote, 'that we are truly anxious that her national efforts should not be frustrated, her people as a whole would insist on the arrangement on equitable terms – to the natives as well as to Belgium – for the direct national Belgian administration of the Congo.'

This of course was a prophecy most happily fulfilled. But if the extremists among the Congo Reformers had had their way, or if the Belgians had been as bad as they were painted, the greater part of the Congo State would have been taken from them, and Belgium would never have stood between the Allies and an overwhelming German army in 1914.

Harry always believed in the absolute sincerity and unselfishness of both Sir Roger Casement and Mr. Morel, but he was prepared years beforehand for their pro-German attitude in the War which entailed one of them in imprisonment and the other in the death of a traitor.

CHAPTER XII

Left in the lurch by our own Government in defence of Liberia and our interests there, Harry showed in 1908 that he had no such Machiavellian schemes of 'nobbling' the Black Republic as were suspected by the French, who, themselves intent on removing their neighbour's landmark, managed nevertheless to inflame the suspicions of a section of the foolish Liberians against the British in general and 'Sir Johnston' in particular. Britain and the United States had been the sponsors for Liberian independence. Since the new British Government under Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey would do nothing, for fear of offending France, Harry took active steps to procure the intervention of America and the appointment of Dutch officers to demarcate the Liberian frontier with the French. He found a ready listener and an ideal co-operator in President Roosevelt, who first communicated with him on the subject in June, 1908. Harry replied as follows:

'Dear Mr. President:

My sister, Mrs. Dolmetsch, has sent me your kind message relative to a wish to see me should I come to America, and discuss with me big game preservation and the problems of Liberia. . . . If this experiment of an English-speaking Negro republic fails to become a prosperous state it will discourage large measures of self-government being granted to the negro in other parts.

What I want to learn is the present condition and possible prospects of the Negro in North America, the West Indies and tropical South America. I am anxious to meet Mr. Booker Washington, whose views on Negro education seem to me admirable. On this subject I do not see eye to eye with several Liberian citizens. . . .'

President Roosevelt replied in several letters, which I curtail in a single quotation:

'My dear Sir Harry:

I am very sincerely desirous that you should come to the United States whilst I am still President and give me pleasure by spending a night at the White House. . . . I should prefer that to be when I am alone, simply because, from reformed spelling and the status of the Negro, to biological nomenclature and your books on wild animals, I have an infinitude of things I should like to talk over with you. I was immensely interested in your postscript showing that you believe in simplified spelling as much as I do. Even the very small length I went in the matter produced a perfect revolt in Congress and the country. I believe our present ridiculous spelling is a very serious handicap in what would otherwise be the surely successful race for world supremacy by the English language. . . .

A book on the Negro as he really is in the islands and coasts of the Carribean Sea by the historian of Uganda – that would indeed be worth reading. . . . I do wish to hear from you about Liberia, and hope you will visit the other Negro republic – Hayti. I want to know whether its falling back has literally been to the old West African

level. I know no one who by experience, training, temperament and ability is better able to make such a comparison than you are. . . . I will help you in every way to look into the Negro problem here, and will have Booker Washington to meet you. . . . Information I have would certainly go to show that Negroes are better treated in Jamaica than in most of the black belt districts of the United States. On the other hand, at Johannesburg and Kimberley the Negroes are certainly treated worse – forced to walk in the middle of the street, and so forth. . . . I firmly believe in granting to Negroes and all races the largest amount of self-government which they can exercise, but have an impatient contempt for the ridiculous theorists who wish to give to the utterly undeveloped races a degree of self-government which only the very highest have been able to exercise with advantage. An even more noxious type is the man who panders to these theorists in the Eutopian treatment of races that are far away, but promptly repudiates their theories when the application is sought nearer home. . . .

I am immensely interested in your Congo book* and your estimate of missionary work. Most travellers abuse missionaries and their converts, but I do know the amount of good they have done among the Indians here. . . .

I can say ditto to all that you have written as to what sportsmen should do. . . . In my forthcoming African trip I shall shoot only specimens that can be set up in the Museum. I venture to send you a volume I recently wrote called "Outdoor Pastimes of an American hunter," in which I have preached the doctrine of preserving all forms of wild life. . . .

* *George Grenfell and the Congo* (Hutchinson, 1903).

What you say in your letter warms my heart. . . . You are one of the rather limited number of men whom for a long time I have hoped to see at the White House. About the Negro: what I want to know is just what you want: the truth, and how to expound and apply it in the interests of practical statesmanship.'

I have strung together these lengthy quotations to give the public some idea of the many points of contact my brother had with Theodore Roosevelt, and some of the things they talked about when they first met in November, 1908.

My brother in his letters to his wife was quick to appreciate the genius and sympathetic charm of President Roosevelt when he became his host. Writing from the White House, he says:

'The President has lodged me magnificently in a splendid suite of rooms. In my bedroom Abraham Lincoln signed the decree which liberated four million slaves and declared slavery henceforth illegal in the United States. The President is absolutely charming. Here, as at the Embassy, I am made to feel completely at home. . . . I have had a perfectly delightful time with Roosevelt, and have unbosomed myself fully to him and to the Secretary of State, Mr. Root. I have been given an opportunity of defending myself against the slanders of the Liberian Envoys. . . .'

When Harry paid a second visit to the White House, it was to talk over a still wider range of subjects with Roosevelt than those enumerated above. Sitting up together far into the night, they wandered from the

plans for Roosevelt's projected East African shooting trip to momentous questions of world politics, which both of them saw would end in a great war unless handled with the utmost wisdom and breadth of vision. They continued these talks in the following year in England when the ex-President (as he had then become) lectured on his accomplished African journey to the Royal Geographical Society in the presence of the King. They again met at Chequers in the year before the War. I derive a vivid view of the genial President from my brother's note books and letters – of his happy and simple home life with Mrs. Roosevelt and their children, Kismet and Ethel; of Roosevelt's unfailing zest, bonhomie and pleasant kind of noisiness. He impressed my brother and Lady Johnston, indeed, by the amount of noise he was able to make! Next to their equally agreeable friend and neighbour, Sir Hubert Parry, the musician, who would make known his needs at breakfast in operatic fashion, they had never heard anyone shout or thump the table so much. The friendly noises of these two energetic geniuses were as cheering and stimulating as the roar of a dinner gong.

Certainly my brother could not have gone to the land of the Big Noise under happier sponsors than President Roosevelt and our Ambassador, historian and Liberal statesman, Mr. (afterwards Viscount) Bryce, whom he had known previously at the Foreign Office and in party politics. As our Liberal statesmen were often on scarcely speaking terms with one another, it is not surprising that my brother, either as a Government official or a politician, or in his later

rôle as leader of deputations to Ministers on a bewildering variety of non-Party questions, should have found some among the Party chiefs far less friendly than others. Lord Ripon, Lord Bryce, Lord Morley and Sir William Harcourt ('dear old Harcourt,' Harry calls him) were always most sympathetic to him, while Lord Rosebery, Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey were not.

The coldly suspicious aloofness of these three at different times towards my brother contrasts strongly with the wholehearted appreciation of him shown by foreign statesmen such as (in order of time) King Leopold of Belgium, the Duke of the Abruzzi, President Roosevelt and the ex-King of Würtemburg. Had he been an American, Belgian, Italian or German, such friends at Court as these would never have allowed him to pass so many years of his active life out of office.

On November 15th Harry started from Washington on his investigation of the Negro in America as the guest of the Bryces and Mr. Robert Ogden, a Director of the Railway on which he travelled 'a thousand miles to the far South, through a country covered with snow, though on a latitude with Tunis. This private car' (he adds in this letter to his wife) 'with an observation platform behind, is like a travelling hotel. I have my own bedroom and bathroom on it, and we are covering a distance as from London to Naples. Dr. Chamberlain (my kind cicerone), Lord Eustace Percy and about twenty others are travelling with us.'

In *The Times* and the *Daily Mail* he gave some thumbnail sketches of American scenery as he 'dis-

covered' it, and managed to get away from the usual hackneyed impressions of America.

He confided to the *Daily Mail* that New York was his nearest approach to an ideal city: 'A great gathering of the habitations of man should be wrought into one mighty mass towering up into the sky, vieing with the works of nature in sublime grandeur of heights and depths – not scattered over the countryside, ruining the beauty of woodland, heath and meadow.'

But if for half his time he imagined himself leading a life depicted by Wells in his forecasts of England fifty years hence, for the remainder he endured 'discomforts and dangers of transport which one would not tolerate in the most backward parts of the Balkan Peninsula.' This was because he insisted on leaving the railways, to drive and boat through the Mississippi states to study the lives of the Negroes there. Everywhere he mentions being more than kindly received:

> 'The send off given me by Roosevelt and Bryce has of course stood me in good stead, and I have been received in the South with almost embarrassing hospitality. The American State Department and the leaders of Negro opinion here are quite convinced that I have done wonders for Liberia.' (That might sound complacent in a newspaper, but it was natural he should write it to his wife.)

He was pleased to find that the teaching of the celebrated Hampton educational institute made its coloured students efficient agriculturists, tailors, architects, secretaries, cooks, and also persons of refinement,

abhorring dirt, tawdriness and bad taste. But he declaims against the attempt in educating the Negro to 'combine Judaism with Christianity and make a fetish of the Old Testament, as also of the Greek and Roman Classics, a mistaken passion which seems peculiar to Protestant Christians, as if when their ancestors left the State Church to find a less regular sect of Christianity they were more than ever concerned to show themselves orthodox in the Classics.'

After enjoying the splendid pine, magnolia and oak forests of southern Alabama and eastern Tennessee he found the Mississippi plains in late autumn depressing with their cracked mud; low, grey scrub; houses usually unpainted, and with little or no garden and no attempt at a tidy fence. But he remarked that the white people here, in contrast to their country and homes, were very good looking. Discussing them on his second visit to Mr. Roosevelt, he drew out the President on the subject of Dickens's *Martin Chuzzlewit,* describing this Mississippi country in pioneer days. Roosevelt said that Dickens had missed the moral he should have drawn from the pioneers. 'Those whom he holds up for sympathy all run away from the heart-breaking difficulties; but those whom posterity should admire the more were the few who stuck to "Eden" and "New Thermophylæ", reclaiming the dreary wilderness to health and a certain prosperity.'

My brother studied with interest the extraordinarily mixed races of Louisiana, the country which changed hands without bloodshed between France and Spain and the expanding Anglo-Saxons. He found the

Negroes often talking French and Spanish, and sometimes Italian too. But the Italians nexer mixed maritally with them, as other whites had done. In the teeth of Anglo-Saxon prejudice, he maintained that the Italians are particularly valuable colonists, and deprecated such silly nicknames for them as 'Dago' and 'Wopp'. Perhaps if the fairer North Italians went to the States more frequently, instead of to the Argentine, and the darker Neapolitans were not the commonest as well as the least educated representatives of Italy in the States, the compatriots of Christopher Columbus, Michael Angelo and Marconi would be held in the repute which they deserve. Harry found them working amicably with the Negroes on sugar estates so ferociously modern in their organized industry as to completely eliminate languor and waste, and by this process of selection the Italians beat all other workers, white or black.

After a painstaking examination of statistics and criminal records and the questioning of many witnesses, my brother came to the conclusion that 'The world has had about enough of the bogey of black assaults on white women; there is still a tendency to deliberately exaggerate them.'

Morally, he esteemed the Negro to be nearly on an equality with the white race, and perhaps slightly superior to the yellow, but he was against mixed marriages. 'The white people in the United States,' he remarked, 'will have to get used to the presence of the Negro in their midst as a brother, but not as a brother-in-law.' He adds in his book on the Negro in the New World: 'When the South matches the physical beauty

and vigour of its white population with an equally high mental development, its Negro problem will be finally solved, assuming that the Negro likewise continues to advance on the lines laid down by the white and coloured teachers of Tuskegee and Hampton.'

I was present once when the late Dr. Blyden (a Minister in the Liberian Government, a University man and writer of great learning and culture, but a full-blooded Negro nevertheless) told my brother how near he once came to being lynched in the southern United States. He related how he was in the street after dark and in evening dress. Being late for an engagement, he began to run. A white girl walking in front of him turned round, and, seeing a Negro running towards her, screamed. All the white men within earshot ran to the spot. Dr. Blyden said he had a momentary temptation, which might have been fatal, to run away before their threatening attitude. But instead, he stood stock still, and gave explanations quietly to his interrogators. From the fact that they at once released him, my brother drew the conclusion that an appeal to calm reason in America seldom goes unheeded.

Furnished with letters of introduction from Mr. Roosevelt to American Governors and Ministers, Harry sailed from the Key West extremity of Florida to Havana in Cuba, and crossed the length of that great and beautiful island to Santiago. He had been getting rather homesick for the Old World, and was glad to find it mirrored in this intensely Spanish city: 'a city of my dreams, the most brilliantly coloured I know.' It must have been; for he describes the Cathedral as

'buff, mauve, pale green, white and pink; the houses ultramarine, cobalt, azure, pale and dark green, mauve, orange, pink grey, brick red and lemon yellow, with white cornices, window frames and doors, and roofs of dark brown-red tiles, with a background of exuberant vegetation of parks and gardens.' He pleads for some imitation of this cheap and multi-coloured distemper in Battersea, Peckham, Camberwell and Bermondsey, and adds, in writings to his wife: 'Of course I am still an artist, and my eyes sparkle and my spirits rise at beautiful things and majestic scenery. I am up at half-past four or five: ride, or make perilous journeys on small boats, toil up mountains, and don evening dress to talk to Presidents and Governors in English, Spanish or French.'

He found that in ten years the Americans had extirpated Yellow Fever in Cuba, endowed towns with well-paved streets and pure water, turned brigands into politicians, barracks into hotels, prisons into libraries. But if they had made life safer they had also made it much dearer, and in making it safer, they had, paradoxically, made it more Spanish and less negroid, for better government had induced increased immigration from the Spanish dominions. (I noticed myself during five years' residence in the Canary Islands that nearly everyone had relations who were either in Cuba or had been there.)

He liked the Hispanicized Negro better than any other – here and in San Domingo and in Central and South America – finding him prouder, more reserved, more self-respecting, and with better taste in dress than blacks under other tutelage. He gave him the charac-

ter of being without servility, quietly courteous, and astonishingly brave. 'Poor Spain!' he exclaims in his book on the New World Negro, 'Her people have such splendid qualities that mere contact with them has improved the often hostile races which have ranged themselves alongside.' Harry wished that all civilized Negroes in hot climates would dress becomingly as in Cuba, 'with no perpetration of the outworn horrors of European taste'. He found that a larger proportion of coloured Cubans could write and read than was the case in most of the Southern States of the Union; nor was there among them any real squalor, aggressive noisiness or ill manners. If their dwellings were not always sanitary, they had about them the dignity of Spain.

What delighted Harry especially in Cuba were the splendid avenues of tidy Royal Palms whose smooth stems are rounded like columns. Leading up to nearly every residence or farmstead, their stately influence redeemed the landscapes from meanness, 'even where industrialism has aimed at substituting the prosperous sameness of sugar cane, cotton or tobacco for the varied colour and outline of forest, bamboo thicket and prairie.'

From eastern Cuba Harry sailed across to Haiti. The United States had not then intervened in its affairs. President Roosevelt wrote to my brother at this time:

> 'I do not think we shall intervene in Haiti. Of course we ought to. But this people of ours simply does not understand how things are outside our own boundaries. In Panama, Cuba, Santo Domingo

and Puerto Rico it needed months or years of preparations before we could get our people to see things straight; and the educated North-Easterners are not only blind but malevolently blind. We ought to have interfered in Venezuela during the past seven years; also in Central America and Haiti.'

Harry did not find Haiti as black as it had been painted, though the country was still cursed by a military despotism verging on the burlesque. The educated Haitans, however much they mismanaged their public affairs, he found agreeable people to meet in society. A sound education was given them by French priests, not omitting a modern scientific course at the Seminary of St. Marcel at Port au Prince, the capital. Living for white men was both safe and cheap. The peasants in small things were thievish, as are also many of the black Jamaicans, but in large concerns they were law-abiding and honest.

As for scenery, the explorer and artist in Harry were both stimulated and delighted. He found the mountainous district between Port au Prince and Léogana musical with falling water, masonry conduits and runnels reducing the extravagant vegetation to orderly pictures, and the clouds, attracted by the high mountains, are always features of the landscapes. These mountain ridges he found to rise abruptly from the sea, or from tremendous gorges. He compared Haitan hillsides to a turkey carpet, with their scrub of scarlet fuchsia, rose-pink honeysuckle, intensely green ferns and yellow and silver everlasting flowers. He found the aromatic scent of the high pine woods

indescribably good after the languor of the tropical lowlands. In these lowlands of Haiti, however, he greatly admired a form of prickly pear cactus which grows to a height of thirty feet in solid stem and pushes out in all directions 'great pudgy hands of flattened leaf-stalks, studded, as though with giant rubies, by red flower-buds, and having a strange resemblance to some Hindu god with innumerable hands.' Always a bird lover, he watched admiringly the woodpeckers of crimson, black and gold, and the metallic hummingbirds darting in and out of the tufted clusters of yellow blossoms of the agaves, whose bright green lily leaves and flower stalk, twenty to thirty feet in height, is such a beautiful feature in these island landscapes.

Crossing the frontier into San Domingo, Harry found a greater picturesqueness in town and village life, and the Spanish-Indian San Domingans, extremely honest, very hospitable, moral and intelligent, adding 'They are quiet and reserved as the Haitans are noisy and expansive.'

Returning to Haiti, and traversing this time its less civilized districts, Harry was the more impressed by the contrast between the two states which share this large island of Hispaniola – countries which though meant to be united geographically are more sundered by cultural differences than old Spain and Portugal, back to back in the Iberian Peninsula. The two and a half million black peasants of Haiti could not even talk comprehensible French to him, and were further removed from their elaborately uniformed governors on the coast by the fact that when giving themselves up to the passion of their sex dances they cut down

their clothing to a pair of epaulettes. It is for these wild nocturnal dances, Harry proved, and not for mystic 'Voodu' worship, that the drums may be heard tapping, booming and rattling throughout the hours of darkness or the madness of moonshine. In most of the country districts he found polygamy openly practised, and the rite of marriage confined to about an eighth of the population. In manners and address, however, even the least civilized of the Haitans were perfectly courteous to himself and to foreigners in general.

Jamaica was the next West Indian island which Harry visited to study the New World Negro. Lord Olivier, who was its Governor at the time, told me afterwards how impressed and amused he was by my brother's tireless energy in photographing choice bits of the Blue Mountains. Harry had brought with him his personal attendant from England, Mr. Arthur Greaves, the present Mayor of Arundel. Mr. Greaves, though a tall and strongly-built man, was not such an active mountaineer as my brother, encumbered by an enormous full plate camera. Once in the area of tree-ferns – those fairies of the mountain undergrowth – my brother gave his patient camera bearer no pause to take breath except when actually snapping the choice bits. The Governor, on a comfortable mount, was left watching, with a sardonic smile, Harry's small and extremely active figure running ahead and shouting directions for more and yet more pictures, while poor Mr. Greaves's endurance almost reached snapping point in a quite unphotographic sense.

Harry considered Jamaica to be not only amazingly

beautiful but also very 'individualistic'. He contrasted its Blue Mountains, softened in outline by their mantle of diversified forest, with the quite differently made mountains of Cuba and the blue ridges carved and scarped by water and crested with scattered pine forest in Haiti. He especially admired the honey-scented, yellow blossom of the logwood trees, and the Japanese effect of the garden fences of bean blossoms, the verandahs covered with the scarlet-orange Bignonia; the oranges bordering every suburban road, the blue-green stems of the wild bananas with scarlet and yellow spathes, the banyan trees with innumerable depending roots, the 'king of the reeds', with immense, fawn-coloured plumes, the silk cotton trees whose mauve-white trunks tower one to two hundred feet in the air; and, not least, the beautiful limestone caverns.

From Jamaica my brother went through the newly-opened Panama Canal with President Taft, as he had just become, and from there visited the coast of South America, 'sumptuous Trinidad' with its East Indian touch, and so home. During the latter part of his journey he differed little superficially from an ordinary tourist; but actually he was engaged the whole time in making a close study of the life of the American Negroes and their past history as enshrined in Government archives, libraries dating from the days of Slavery and Emancipation, legal documents setting forth in cold language forgotten horrors once enshrined by the law, and generally compiling material for his history and description of the New World Negro, subsequently published by Messrs. Methuen in 1910. When Mr. Roosevelt returned to America from Europe in

that year, he said, in speaking to a Negro audience in Palm Garden: 'I have been meeting abroad Sir Harry Johnston, the English colonial administrator, and a man who has very decided views on every conceivable subject. He has written a book on the American Negro, to which no other book on the same subject can be compared. He had some very severe things to say. But in summing up he declared that in no other part of the globe had the Negro made the progress he had in America, and that nowhere else had he the chance to live as fully a developed life.'

The historical parts of this book, giving abundant chapter and verse, effectually shattered the still cherished national delusion of ours (largely propagated by Kingsley in Victorian times) that the English-speaking peoples were far more humane than the Spaniards in the treatment of subject races. With no object but the vindication of the truth, Harry proved the exact opposite to have been the case. He elaborately compared the Slave Laws and edicts and recorded customs of the settlers of various nations in the New World. He gives the highest place for humanity and Christian treatment to Spain. Portugal he considered had behaved the second best, then France, while our people came a bad fourth, only excelled in wicked cruelty and brutality by the Dutch, whose womenkind, judging by the many recorded stories of them, seem to have been she-devils putting out the eyes of their female slaves from motives of jealousy, and ordering them two hundred lashes (a common sentence) across the breasts, to cause the greatest agony. There were worse atrocities, which could only be recorded by a cold quotation of

the records of the time. An American lady suggested the lopping off of slaves' thumbs long after the times when such barbarities were supposed to have ceased, and her husband only demurred to her proposal because it would have incapacitated them for cotton gathering. The slave code of Spain, as quoted in this book, made the clergy the guardians, in a measure, of the slaves, and it was made easy for them to bring cruel masters to justice, which they frequently did with great zeal. In addition, magistrates were to appoint other 'men of good character' to report on the manner in which the slaves were being treated. Although the edict of Charles V of 1542, abolishing slavery, unfortunately remained a dead letter, it contrasts pleasantly with Queen Elizabeth's share-holding in Sir John Hawkins's slave-trading venture, for which she lent him one of her vessels called in nauseous blasphemy the 'Jesus'.

Harry left the 'Spanish Main' a whole-hearted admirer of Spain, as he had always been an indulgent and fair-minded critic of her little sister Portugal. 'Poor Spain!' he repeats, 'her people's splendid qualities, her valour, zeal, unflagging industry, her mastery of art and appreciation of the value of colour in the church, the home, the city and the landscape, her magnificent literature, written in the noblest development of the Latin speech – all these have availed her nothing in that three-hundred-and-thirty-years' long struggle with the Anglo-Saxon for supremacy in the New World.' American reviewers appreciated this as 'profoundly disconcerting, but true'. But one of the stock properties of English magazine stories of treasure

trove, mangrove, palm grove and all that stale old nonsense will continue to be the Spanish villain.

This book was followed by a series my brother wrote of historical works dealing with early British colonial and pioneering enterprise and the beginnings of our Empire in all quarters of the globe. They were mainly intended for juvenile reading, but as they lacked bigotry or national bragadocio their value as school prizes may not stand as high as their historical accuracy.

The dovecots of our national complacency were stirred when he wrote an article on Drake in the *Cornhill*, deprecating that worthy being raised to the position of a melodramatic hero of romance by the simple expedient of ignoring the darker shades which cling to his reputation. 'Drake was vainglorious and quite unscrupulous,' he writes. 'He did not hesitate to murder in a judicial manner Thomas Doughty, a high-minded scholar and gentleman, who might have been his rival.'

Harry seemed to be regarded as the most natural chronicler of explorers, anciently and recently dead, and the friend of the survivors of the older generation whose exploring days were done.

He was a pall-bearer at Stanley's funeral. As the biographer of Livingstone, he took the principal part in the ceremonies and speeches to commemorate that great man's centenary, being received by the Mayor and Corporation at Bath when he unveiled a tablet to Livingstone in that City. (It was at Bath that my brother as a very young man had delivered the first address he ever gave on Africa.) He was delighted to

meet there General Bradshaw; for together they had tackled the Slave Trade against which Livingstone had inveighed. It is noteworthy that neither this Bath meeting nor the great ones in London, Manchester and Cambridge, at which he spoke as the guest of Geographical banquets, received the recognition of the Government. In that neglect of the memory of one of our greatest explorers they were only running true to the blindness of nearly all our Governments to the merits of truly great and unworldly men. A Sovereign and her successive Ministers who bestowed no decoration on such men as Livingstone, Dickens and Thackeray showed how little they were aware of true greatness in their day. Harry remarked in one of his speeches: 'The Government treated Livingstone very shabbily in money matters.' He told the story of how Matthew Flinders, who circumnavigated Australia and secured it for us just as the French were about to annex it as Terre Napoléon, was censured by our Government for having been so long absent as a prisoner of war, and told that he had lost the chance of promotion. He died of a broken heart, and nothing was done for his wife and child till the Government of Australia came into existence. But what else could have been expected of the sort of men who ignored Nelson's last wish, and who allowed the only perpetuation of Flinders's name on the map of the new continent to be affixed to a small island where the last survivors (or halfcaste descendants of them) of the native Tasmanians were relegated after the entire race had been wiped out by a systematic massacre and 'drive' under Government supervision in the 19th Cen-

tury! Flinders's daughter's child was the celebrated Egyptologist, Professor Flinders-Petrie, who was my brother's friend and near neighbour in West Sussex.

It seems to be a rule that those whom the Gods favour die young. One of the few explorers who bid fair to receive any proper degree of official favour in his day was Captain Scott of Polar fame. In 1910 my brother and his wife were going to stay with Lord and Lady Lee at Chequers. Travelling in the same carriage was a fresh-coloured, stoutly-built young man. A window got stuck; he pulled it down and the chance travelling companions began a conversation. He disclosed himself as Captain Scott, and his destination the same as their own. He was about to set out on his last voyage of adventure, and, stimulated by a fellow-explorer, poured out his hopes and fears. He pinned great faith on his motor sleighs, which he hoped would transport everything so much quicker than the dogs. They, alas! broke down, and in February, 1913, Harry was at the commemoration service for Scott in St. Paul's which the King attended.

Within a few months my brother was in St. Paul's for the funeral of another of his friends – Sir Alma Tadema; while just previously he had lost one of the most steadfast of his supporters and admirers – W. T. Stead. It will be recorded that this truly great Journalist was among those drowned in the sinking of the *Titanic* by an iceberg. It is worth recalling as an affirmation of Stead's much-discussed psychic gifts that he told my brother several years before his death of his conviction that he would meet his end struggling in a crowd.

THE HON. LADY JOHNSTON

CHAPTER XIII

REFERENCE should be made here to the permanent home which my brother acquired in the country. He was a country-lover above all things, and his love of England was in great part epitomized by the famous saying of Charles II when he drove through this beautiful land of ours, where art and nature are (alas! one must often nowadays say *were*) so happily blended: '*This* is a country worth fighting for!' Harry had fought for it in more senses than one. It had been his aim for quite half his life to become sufficiently well off to choose an English home in unspoilt country within an easy railway journey of London. Our family had from very early days been attracted to West Sussex, and Harry already knew the neighbourhood pretty well before he acquired a Life Lease for himself and Lady Johnston from the Duke of Norfolk in St. John's Priory, Poling, near Arundel. This would better be named a 'Commandery', because it was a house of the Knights Hospitallers. In its oldest part, which dates from the 12th Century, there are still a well-preserved piscina, beautiful oak roofing beams, and the Latin inscriptions on the tombs of the pious Knights who lived here for nearly four centuries. Cardinal Gasquet makes mention of it in his book on the Monastic Buildings of England published in 1906. My architect brother, Mr. Philip M. Johnston, well known as an authority on old Sussex churches, took the work of restoring St. John's Priory in hand. A

description of it is to be found from his pen in *Country Life*.

In this article he has the courage to record what few people but ourselves would call a fact, that the Priory was at one time 'haunted', by the sound of faint but quite unmistakable Gregorian chanting, with a background of some reedy instrument. This was heard by a sufficient number of people independently and at different times, and with such circumstantial details as to raise it above the level of the ordinary ghost story. What struck me most about it was the difficulty of locating the sound: it seemed at one and the same time to rise from the ground at one's feet (in my case just outside the wall of the old chapel), from the chapel itself, and from the air around. It was muffled, yet light; indistinct as to individual words, yet familiar in rhythm, intonation, and period, plainly suggesting the Gloria Patri of a Latin psalm. I myself heard it on a Sunday morning, and when I went to tell Harry about it I found he and Lady Johnston had had very much the same experience on the other side of the chapel the evening before. Lady Johnston has always confirmed this, without attempting explanation. These dates were respectively on the eve and the feast day of St. Augustine, apostle of England. What chiefly differentiated this ghostly singing from that of a flesh and blood choir was the way in which the unseen choristers intoned the notes without 'chest sound' – almost like the 'pinging' of giant gnats. I am aware that sounds ridiculous. It would sound ugly if I called it nasal; for it was perfectly harmonious, but sufficiently unlike the modern rendering even of Gregorian music

to be strange and quite startling. Only once have I heard anything that reminded me of it. It was in the Pyrenees. A number of men belonging to some Order unfamiliar to me passed by, chanting a psalm high up in the throat, with long drawn-out notes, exactly similar in tone, but with a less ghostly timbre, to the Song of the Priests at the Priory. I can only suppose it was a survival of an old fashion of chanting the Office. But though I have stayed with Cistercians, who might be expected to preserve the old ways, I have never heard anything like it at any other time.

These peculiar experiences came to an abrupt end about twenty years ago, when the work of restoration at the Priory was completed.

Harry took a great delight in laying out the gardens of his Sussex home. They were already beautified with terraced lawns, velvety cedars and yews and ancient orchard trees, whose gnarled branches sheltered drifts of daffodils.

The greater part of the Priory is of weathered Sussex stone, including the roof of the old chapel. Above the south porch an immense vine of wistaria harmonizes perfectly.

Inside the Priory, nearly every inch of wall space is covered with African arms, trophies, horns, heads, and above all, the almost countless pictures and sketches my brother did in many different parts of the world – the majority in Africa, but many in England, Ireland, Malta and southern Europe, India and America. The best are studies of the wild – landscapes, birds, beasts and savages. He did a few good portraits of white men. The only portraiture at which my bro-

ther failed was in depicting women of his own race. Lady Victoria Herbert, who had considerable claims to beauty, happened to be staying with Lady Portsmouth at the same time as my brother. She was quite flattered when he undertook to paint her portrait, but not at all when allowed to see it near completion.

It would not be easy to find a man who tried his hand at so many things as my brother, and who failed in so few. But a few conspicuous failures he did have. Though very understanding as to the feelings of some women, and though popular with all but very masculine ones, his portraits of them seemed doomed to be unconscious caricatures, the more wounding because of a certain weird and horrible likeness. The same may be said of his frequent descriptions of other people's religion, where again his talent for caricature – often subconscious – persistently intruded.

One of Harry's neighbours was Lady Percy St. Maur. After listening to him for a while on the subject of religion, she remarked drily: 'His trouble seems to be regret that he is not God'. He put it to me a little differently in a generous mood, by asserting his readiness to become a Catholic if 'they' would make him Pope! He was perpetually tilting at windmills because they ground so slowly.

The recreations of many men were among his several serious professions. He was serious where most are light, and flippant where most are serious. One of his few real recreations was piano playing. In that, he never acquired a light touch, though he preferred the lightest music. So far as I know, Harry was the only man who dared tell his brother-in-law, Arnold

Dolmetsch, that he preferred Gilbert and Sullivan opera to the supreme English composers of the Sixteenth Century, and a piano to a harpsichord. He lacked the spirit of Mr. William Shakespeare (not Bacon's incognito), of whom Miss Ducat relates that before playing Mendelssohn's Prelude in E Minor he murmured 'Please God, don't let William thump.'

St. John's Priory soon became a place of pilgrimage for many Africans, in race or sympathy. Here came the Kabaka or King Daudi (David) of Buganda, one of the five provinces of Uganda, and by far the most important of the three native kingdoms of that Protectorate. We had last seen him as a little boy in his native palace. He was now a young man, tastefully garbed in a rich blue robe, and well educated by his clerical tutor.

Though Poling might have made a most restful retreat from the world's worries, my brother seemed to accumulate here an increased store of energy for several simultaneous campaigns in public affairs which cut clean across the conventional lines of politics. They are enumerated in a letter to a friend who had asked him to support the Brighton Liberals:

> 'I am only a Conservative in desiring to preserve the beautiful in the English countryside. Besides this, the measures I am most keenly interested in are the Parliamentary suffrage for women, the cultivation of a good understanding with Germany and Austria, and the institution of military training for our young in the forms of Scouting and Territorialism.'

Harry was a Vice-President of the United Suffrage

Society – a very literary body, which included his friend and neighbour, Mr. Israel Zangwill, Canon Hannay, who had married into the same family as our architect brother, Miss Beatrice Harradan, and Mr. William de Morgan. The organ of this Society was Votes for Women, the journal which the Pethic-Lawrences carried with them when they left the Women's Social and Political Union.

Harry preached the doctrine of the Importunate Widow, as against that of physical violence, remarking:

'Bores are virtually immortal and unpunishable. You can do so much boring within the law. Bores not only enjoy a notorious longevity, but after their death some fraternal or filial bore publishes their lives and letters!'

A great abetter of his local Suffrage activities was Lady Maud Parry, a near neighbour, to whom I am indebted for the loan of several amusing poems and letters which Harry wrote her in the course of his long friendship with her and her husband, Sir Hubert Parry, the musician.

Here are some verses he penned on the

QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE PRESIDENT OF THE LITTLEHAMPTON SUFFRAGE SOCIETY

Be a Gorilla, but still be good,
A Cannibal, yet not shy!
A Maenad who in a serious mood
Thinks of Elizabeth Fry!
All things to all men; temperate;
Loud with the harmless jest!
Low with the phrase indelicate,

Following the behest
Of your glad, kind heart and your innate tact,
Fitting yourself to be
Foundress in truth, and head in fact
Of our Suffrage So-ci-etee!

Descending from the general to the personal, here is a skit on Lady Maud herself, which shows that my brother possessed something of the easy swing of rhythm which he so much appreciated in the delightful author of the Bab Ballads:

MRS. ARTHUR PONSONBY AND MRS. PLUNKET GREENE

(A Hint to the Unwary.)

Our Lady Maud is fickle: I dare say you have seen
That her manner changes instantly from sombre to serene,
And equally from intimate to haughtily aloof,
While confident encroachers meet an indirect reproof:
For if they speak of 'Doll' and 'Gwen,' a change comes o'er the scene,
And it's 'Mrs. Arthur Ponsonby' and 'Mrs. Plunket Greene'.

She sat with fifty factory girls and lightly passed the time,
The while she chatted easily and read in prose and rhyme,
Of 'Dolly's' favourite shape in stays, 'Gwen's' love for chewing gum,
And 'Gladys' ' (Lady Ripon's) skill in language deaf and dumb.
But when the sound of wheels was heard and a heedless lassie asked:

'Expectin' "Gwen" and "Gladys"?' the Aristocrat unmasked
Replied in freezing accents, 'I don't know what you mean;
It's my sister, Lady Ripon, and my daughter, Mrs. Greene.'

But it's rather with the highly-placed one sees the steely tip
Of the claw between the velvet if they chance to make a slip;
For instance, Mrs. Asquith, glaring hard at Daisy Jones,
Asked 'How's your cousin Eddie, Maud?' and heard the icy tones
'My cousin, Prince Edgardo, is suffering somewhat more
Than usual, Mrs. Asquith, and your car is at the door.'

'Your daughter Dorothea' is the nearest that *I* get;
I once said 'Mrs. Gwendolen' – half whispered it – and yet –
The one brief look that followed from the dark-fringed Russian eye
Made me glad I was in England, in a land of libertye.

He puts the following verses into the mouth of Lady Maud Parry herself. Though written before the War, they somehow sound very modern.

MY CHILDREN'S FRIENDS.

They tell me I'm good-natured, they'll write upon my tomb
This woman spoilt her daughters and induced a certain gloom

In her husband's disposition by indulging every wish,
Refusing not to read aloud nor serve the seasoned dish.
Yet, despite my resolution to be charitably kind,
I cannot like my children's friends, nor in them always find
Those qualities of heart and brain, attractiveness of form
Which fascinate dear Dolly and take Gwendolen by storm.
I cannot even follow with a reverential air
The milder craze that Arthur has for iridescent hair,
So obviously dyed: and when I hear that Harry Greene
Is bringing down a Serbian to sing behind a screen
Because he hasn't any teeth, or fears to show his tongue
Yet possesses such an alto with a wondrous strength of lung;
I *simply* now *refuse* to say 'I'm very glad you've come!'
How *can* I, with Sir Hubert standing by and looking ing glum?
For Hubert quite agrees with me. Indulgent to a fault,
He yet rejects the Vampire newly issued from the vault,
Which seems to be the type that now appeals to Dolly most,
Cadaverous, and dieted on pigeons' blood and toast;
A gruesome thing, with wispy hair, great eyes of baleful glow
And carmine lips, prehensile jaws, eye-teeth that plainly show.

Oh! I know I'm hypersensitive, that others merely see
In this dread form a woman's soul, fierce, fighting to be free;
An unconventional sister of the unsuccessful poor
Banting to pass through Arthur's test, the needle-eye-like door:
While I am merely commonplace, Victorian and a boor.
You say 'Not so with Gwendolen!' which shows how much *you* know.
Gwen's crazes are political, but not the less *de trop*.
First it was Mr. Asquith; now it's always Lloyd George.
I'm naturally radical; but she has raised my gorge.
'Insurance' is her constant theme; and 'Mummy, don't you think
"Lloydy" might raise the Income Tax and put some more on drink,
And thus provide the means to give each modest cottage home
A gramophone with Harry singing Father's "Road to Rome"?'
Call me conventional; give me, dear, a mutton chop for lunch,
With greens, potatoes plainly boiled, and toast that I can crunch.
For friends I choose the wholesome sort with normal coloured hair
Who eat the kind of things I eat and wear the clothes I wear.
So henceforth as a hostess I shall firmly close my doors
To Freaks and Neo-Platonists and proletarian bores.

If my brother had a gift for dealing with serious

persons and politics lightly, as in the case of the Suffrage movement in the years immediately preceding the War, he raised almost to the realm of religion a theme which unfortunately is still dismissed by the majority as 'not practical politics'; namely, 'the preservation of the beautiful in the English countryside' and elsewhere. He did carry this cult in one direction right into the realm of 'practical politics', in that he was one of the principal promoters of legal restriction of the slaughter of beautiful birds and the importation into this country of their plumage for the adornment of what in this respect, for all his Feminist sympathies, he was inclined to call the Unfair Sex. He had hardly done speaking for a Suffrage deputation to Mr. Asquith before he appeared before the Premier on the subject of the Plumage Bill. He was fiercely assailed by the Plumage Committee of the Textile Trade and persons on the London Chamber of Commerce. He carried on the Bird Protection campaign over a very wide field, pointing out how essential many species of birds were in different parts of the world for the keeping in check of insects and grubs inimical to human or animal health and to agriculture. *The Sketch* remarked at this time:

> 'Sir Harry never dines out without being called upon to explain his position in regard to plumage and the gun. When he sits among ospreys and eats the underdone quail his presence always provokes defiant queries from ladies as to the things he does and does not allow: "And you yourself have shot thousands of lions!" is the countercharge when he looks reproachfully on the bird of Paradise perched

on the hair of a fair neighbour. To which charge he answers that the only lion he ever shot was one that had floundered into his African pigstye for a very rare and precious pig which he had hoped to bring home to the Zoological Gardens.'

As I have mentioned before, my brother carried on a ceaseless campaign in speech and writing for the preservation of the wild fauna of the Empire. He received a great deal of support in India and Ceylon among those who wished to save the most varied and interesting wild life of those fascinating countries from serious depletion and in many cases extinction. My brother had been instrumental in creating the greatest game reserves in Africa. He complained bitterly that it had become the fashion for those crossed in love or unhappily married to relieve their feelings or repair their reputation at the expense of the big game of Africa. He pleaded for the badger and the otter in England, and even the weazel tribe, as being enemies of the destructive rat and that supreme enemy to the much-needed re-afforestation of this country – the rabbit. He showed how harmful rodents had increased with the decrease of such a handsome creature as the Cape polecat, and advocated the breeding in ranches of fur-bearing animals rather than their cruel trapping and extirpation in a wild state.

But Brer Fox was as much in his bad books as Brer Rabbit. After having lost some of his favourite peafowl and poultry, he would like to have sentenced him to transportation to Ireland, where also, it will be remembered, he wanted the wolf back again, and by way of encouragement, painted a spirited picture of

'The Last Irish Wolf' devouring a lamb. Irish poultry and sheep farmers were not in the picture. 'Fox-hunting', he wrote, 'is one of the most foolish and unprofitable of the hundred religions – each with its shibboleths – followed by the English upper classes. In the desolate parts of Ireland it may still be permissible as an outdoor exercise if we may assume we are not torturing to death a highly intelligent mammal.'

A worse pest than the fox even, in Harry's opinion, was the keeper, with his thirst for the destruction of every other form of wild life but that of his sacred birds – scarcely to be called wild at all, for that matter. But, being most reasonable, my brother favoured the preservation, along with the rest of our English fauna, of the sort of people by whom keepers are kept. He recognized that the landed gentry have done much more than the State to plant and preserve woodlands and the other beauties of our English countryside, maintaining them in some cases as parks for the recreation of others. And how fiercely he inveighed against some of these 'others'! He declared that the desecration committed by the masses when let loose on the country entitles them to be described as high-spirited baboons! 'Woods are being cut down,' he lamented, 'downs cut up, rivers turned into sewers. Whilst the poor can find no home to live in, unchecked speculation in gimcrack villa building goes on apace.' He recognized, what seems to have generally escaped the attention of our town-bred legislators, that shortage of suitable houses for the poor is now more a rural than an urban grievance. 'If only philanthropists of the Rowton breed would construct dwellings *for mar-*

ried couples with children only, they would be great benefactors to their country', and he shows his cross-bench mind by adding: 'Bring this lack of cottages home to the average Radical politician, and he at once thinks of whose park can be curtailed, till he gets into office, and then he favours a policy of *laisser faire*. The ideal of the Labour Party in our England, is all workmen's dwellings and football areas and Battersea Parks.' He compared our new houses disadvantageously with those of the Riviera, and remarks how fine are the outskirts of modern Cologne. One way of retaining what we have of beautiful scenery, he thought, should be by indulgent land laws towards those who maintain it for the benefit of others, so that 'The Garden of England' should be a widespread reality, instead of only a railway advertisement for Kent, which does not deserve it, considering how its authorities have permitted such places as Dartford to spill their sordid slums far and wide over the countryside and have stereotyped a class of seaside resort which makes Britons possessing the smallest modicum of culture, gaiety or love of beauty spend their last available penny to go abroad. 'In all big cities', was Harry's aspiration, 'let us build upwards, not outwards.'

Just as it is at last recognized that a man has no right to poison his neighbour's air, by factory fumes, for example, quite logically, my brother thought, it should be at least considered un-Christian to spoil his view. 'Nature,' he muses in the *Westminster Gazette*, 'as far as we can understand her operations, does seem to be both blind and pitiless, but the spirit of Chris-

tianity may be due to the workings of some law superior to the ordinary rules of evolution. A widening of Christian principles seems to be leading to the present desire to preserve beauty.'

He did *not* think that a widening of Christian principles made beauty in any form less worthy to be fought for than it ever was, especially the beauty, concrete and abstract of our Mother Country. Quite logically, therefore, he made 'the institution of military training for our young in the forms of Scouting and Territorialism' one of the planks of his non-Party platform. He never belonged to the 'Blue Water School'. As far back as 1909, he wrote: 'Do not make a fetish of Dreadnoughts. I have long been of opinion that a system of compulsory military training should be put in force in Great Britain and all the self-governing Colonies, to commence in a boy's school days and largely take the place of the senseless and often childish games over which boys and men waste so much of their time and strength. A nation trained in arms would do much to neutralize the momentary success of a hostile naval or aerial raid. Accidents of weather or sudden inventions might nullify the insurance of our navy.'

Lady Portsmouth, of Quaker sympathies, though her husband was for a time Under-Secretary for War, must have differed from him; for he wrote to her in February, 1910: 'As to the general question of War, I will certainly read the little book you have so kindly sent me and give it due consideration. Few can be more strongly in favour of peaceful methods of progress than I am, who have seen some of the horrors

of war and been in frequent terror of being shot or wounded myself. But so long as it is the *Ultima Ratio* of nations, I consider the British people ought to be more trained for defensive warfare than any other, because of the hundreds of millions of men and women committed to their charge and protection all over the world. I am equally in favour of the compulsory training of women in aid to the wounded. I cannot think of a greater impetus towards peace than such a movement. If we really had a citizen army, we should be far more loth to go to war than we are at present, when ten millions clamour for war through our press, believing that if it were declared the risk to life and limb will only devolve on about 700,000 of their fellow-countrymen paid to run those risks.

Moreover, if we are unprepared for war we must be reconciled to the armed predominance of Germany. If only she could be got to agree to the *status quo,* then indeed we might lay down our arms to a great extent.

For something like twenty years, missionaries tried to induce the Central African Arabs to give up the Slave Trade, with absolutely no result. Should its devastation have gone on, or was I right to take up arms and put an end to it? The increase of population in those regions since that war has been extraordinary, and one feels that the slain were not killed for nothing.'

It was staying with Lady Portsmouth that my brother first met Lord Haldane, the father of the Territorials, but found him uncommunicative, even after drinking a whole bottle of champagne. Harry cannot

have had him in mind therefore when he wrote in the *Westminster Gazette:*

> 'One is beginning to notice that most statesmen in office are confirmed champagne drinkers. They appear at public functions with lacklustre eyes which are transformed by the first few gulps of this delicious wine. Every now and again the British world is shocked at the collapse of some great politician under the strain of party warfare, men who have been obliged to resort to champagne. . . .'

Despite his clear perception that she was setting the pace in armaments and seriously threatening war, Harry, like Lord Haldane, found Germany to a great extent at this time, his 'spiritual home', and we have seen that an understanding (not peace at any price) with Germany and Austria was one of his principal aspirations; only he thought that if it were known that we were prepared for war we should the more easily insure peace.

In the *Daily Graphic,* ten years before the War, he sketched out in map and letterpress the apportionment of the control of the world on such lines as he thought would give all educated and expanding nations a fair, safe and beneficent outlet and 'place in the sun'. In the critical years that followed, he tried to forward his views, or gain information which could establish or modify them by conversation with President Roosevelt, Senator Root, and the Baron von Speck von Sternberg, German Ambassador at Washington, while he was in the United States. The last-named reported these conversations (whose object of course was the prevention of war between the British and German

peoples) to von Kühlmann, the Councillor to the German Embassy in London and at times Acting Ambassador. Shortly afterwards, the German Colonial Society in London entertained von Kühlmann and my brother as fellow-guests. Delivering an address on that occasion, sympathetic to German expansion, Harry was bold enough nevertheless to suggest, in the interests of Germany and of international peace, the restitution of the most French portions of Alsace-Lorraine to France and the allotment to her of most of Morocco in return for Austro-German control, in varying degrees, of the Balkans, Asia Minor and Mesopotamia. His ideas attracted wide attention in Germany, and at the invitation of the King of Würtemberg my brother delivered in his presence a series of lectures at Stuttgart in 1910. He discoursed on the compromises and adjustments necessary to regulate and satisfy the colonial ambitions of Germany and other nations fitted to play the part of tutor, colonizer, policeman, arbiter and exploiter (in a beneficent sense) in backward, disturbed, undeveloped lands whose inhabitants were so mixed and mutually antagonistic that no violation of nationality would occur if a strong arm kept the peace, as the British do in India.

Belonging to the Balkans and Near Eastern Committees, he was far from wishing to curtail the reasonable ambitions of the renascent nationalities of the Southern Slavs, Bulgars, Greeks and Rumanians. On the contrary, he favoured the retrocession of Bessarabia to Rumania, a step which was actually taken as part of the Great War settlement. But he saw more clearly than most people that the Balkans would almost cer-

tainly fire the spark to start the next great war, on account of the conflicting aims of their different and undisciplined nationalities, meeting and clashing in Macedonia and other menacing 'Ulsters' of the ancient and constant cockpit where the ferocity of the East is armed by the commercially fostered militarism of the West. He favoured a single 'thin red line' of German railway communications from Berlin and Vienna to Constantinople and Baghdad, with an unfortified corridor to the head of the Persian Gulf (controlled at its Ocean mouth by the British). Passing through debatable lands, he thought it would not only keep the peace in the Near and Middle East, but in the world at large, by giving the German peoples ample scope for their talents and ambitions, and – to put it cynically – enough trouble within their new domain to prevent them looking for and making trouble elsewhere.

In 1911, the critical and fateful year of the Agadir crisis, my brother visited not only Germany and France but also Morocco itself, where the trouble lay. He was in favour of the 'hands off Morocco' counsel to Germany and in favour of French rule there, on the condition that France should abandon her shadowy claims over Syria and withdraw her veto to British rule in Oman, the Arabian sultanate which commands the bottle-necked entrance of the Persian Gulf. This last concession would have made it safe for us to admit the Germans as far Indiawards as Mesopotamia, while south of Syria Harry had long held that the Jews should be encouraged to re-establish a national home in Palestine, and thus form a neutral buffer state between the Germans in Syria and a permanently British

Sinai and Egypt, from which last is the shortest airway across a British-controlled Arabia to the western confines of India.

But how, he asked, could Russia be induced to agree to Germano-Austrian control over Balkan politics, and more particularly over Constantinople, Asia Minor and the Euphrates Valley and Syria? By a protectorate over Armenia, with a corridor from it along the new, easternmost German frontier to the head of the Persian Gulf, at whose mouth our new strategic points would safeguard India as much from Russian as from German approach. The long-coveted Russian access to a warm water port would have impinged very little on Persia, and would have entailed the obligation of respecting the absolute independence of the rest of it, under the wise financial guidance of the American Schuster.

I think that my brother thought that combined pressure of the German powers and ourselves would be necessary to establish this compromise with Russia. He saw much to excuse increased German armaments while the great Slav Empire thrust her military railways and the overspill of her enormous and prolific population between Germany's two eastern arms in Poland. As a remedy to this peril to the world's peace, he pleaded for the reconstitution of Poland as another buffer state. 'There must be a point beyond which the pressure of German ambition is foolish, but short of which the constraint of Germany by the Triple Entente is unwise,' he wrote in the *Nineteenth Century* in 1910, and pleaded 'If only this point could be quickly determined and an understanding arrived at,

the burdens of many millions of people would be sensibly lightened and the civilization of backward peoples would be brought appreciably nearer to achievement.' But that vital point was never agreed upon, for the world was not as reasonable as he had dared to hope.

A lecture which my brother gave to London Jews to persuade them to colonize Canaan rather than Kenia ended in a free fight between Zionists and Anti-Zionists.

Although the French Government owed its only claim to Syria to the educational work there of the religious Orders with which its anti-Catholic executive was at war, it maintained this claim in order to keep Germany out, and wanted as well the only other debatable country fit for white colonization – Morocco.

Czarist Russia had no intention of giving up Poland, and wanted to make another Poland of Persia. My brother's Press advocacy of an independent Poland and Finland was applauded – in England. But our Diehards were much annoyed at his trenchant sayings: 'We must get rid of Potsdamery in Ireland,' and 'The "shoot 'em down" Imperialists are the real Little Englanders.'

Most discouraging of all; when my brother returned to Germany to reiterate his ideas of world peace by agreement he found the attitude of the Berlin authorities and their understudies who dictated the subject matter of lectures to that of the pleasanter people of Cologne very different to the friendly rulers of Würtemburg and Bavaria. The Prussians would not hear a word in English. They were curt, rude, and entirely uncompromising. Having read the gist of his proposed lecture, which repeated the idea of the Alsace-Lorraine exchange, they cancelled it without explana-

tion. As the Bavarians do not love the Prussians, this same lecture was subsequently heard with complete tolerance at Munich.

Harry, however, still clung to the idea that the only hope of world peace was a de-Prussianized Germany with an outlet in the East. This implied more or less the reincorporation of Austria with her non-German associates in the German Confederation – the reconstitution of something like the Holy Roman Empire. Despite Gibbon's cynicism that that amorphous Empire was neither holy nor Roman, it did for a long time cement in comparative peace a number of confused and potentially antagonistic nationalities, which was – imperfectly the function of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Harry therefore agreed with the late Lord Salisbury that 'if the Austrian Empire did not exist it would have to be created. The Poles in Austria were decidedly better off than those under Russia and Prussia. There were hopeful signs too that the Archduke Ferdinand, heir apparent to the throne of the Hapsburgs, was pro-Slav, and contemplated the creation of a United States of Central Europe, with full local self-government to the once-subject countries, which have since treated their former rulers – the Austrians and Hungarians – with worse injustice than they themselves ever had to complain of, and have made their rival Customs Houses a nuisance to traders and travellers.

When France ceded a part of her barely exploited Congo territories to Germany as a slight compensation for the banged door in Morocco, Harry began to suggest further changes in the map of Africa which would

assuage ill-will till such time as the great Eastern Question was ripe for solution. He advocated our ceding to Germany the island of Zanzibar and the then isolated and useless port of Walfish Bay, because, while little good to us, they occupied in relation to her East and South-West African colonies the position of a lodge commanding the gates to a land-owner's estate. In exchange, he hoped that Germany would concede to us the right of way he himself had originally annexed in the hinterland of the Tanganyika Territory and through its great lake, between British Nyasaland and the Uganda Protectorate.

In the late autumn of 1912, he was one of those mainly instrumental in getting up an Anglo-German friendship conference at the Caxton Hall, at which he read a paper on the removal of conflicting interests in Colonial development. Count von Leyden presided. Lord Courtney, Lord Weardale, Lord Avebury, and Mr. Acland (Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs) were on the platform.

My brother read a paper before them on 'The Removal of Conflicting Interests in Colonial Development'. He pleaded in the first place for open markets, so that Germany should have no just complaint of being throttled commercially as well as colonially. But he still pleaded that she should have a Near Eastern outlet and sphere of influence. He always considered that the Morocco Question was the pendant of the Baghdad Railway and the unsatisfied ambitions of Germany and Austria, and that but for unreasonably sustained French ambitions in the Levant there would have been no Morocco crisis. He strove to define and

limit each nation's legitimate aims and commitments, and to proclaim unequivocably what were essentials. 'France, like every other power, ourselves included,' he wrote, 'is perfectly selfish in her policy.' 'But,' he added repeatedly, 'The safety and integrity of France, and the independence of Belgium, Holland and Luxemburg are our first line of defence.'

But it soon became apparent to him at this 1912 Anglo-German Congress in London that the German delegates were thinking of tactics and not world-wide peace: were intent on setting off one nation against another on the *Divide et impera* principle, or lack of principle.

He remarked that certain Lutheran pastors in particular shocked the British delegates by their excessive ambitions and their attitude of offering to Britain the partnership with them of world dominion, at the expense of the Latin countries. It was because of these proposals for a robber alliance with Germany that the London Peace Conference of 1912 ended distinctly coldly, and my brother thought it necessary to again urge Sir Edward Grey to make it known unequivocally that a German invasion of Flanders or the Low Countries, Denmark, or our Egyptian doorway to India would be tantamount to a declaration of war against ourselves.

It may be asked now (though it was never questioned at the time) of what practical importance my brother's views were, considering that he no longer held any public office. The answer is that as a free-lance journalist and the author of several works on Foreign Politics, illumined by his experience as an ex-

official with an intimate acquaintance with the Foreign Office and nearly all our leading statesmen, he was not only in a position to advise, but actually to know in some cases more than those in authority. He could, and did, lead public opinion by going ahead of it and by speaking his mind in print quite fearlessly. As a practical Imperialist, he could afford to incur the abuse of our own give-nothing, get-nothing Jingoes. As a sincere democrat, he did indeed annoy the Foreign Office by pointing out that under Mr. Asquith's Premiership and Sir Edward Grey's immediate control, its frequently illiberal policy was conducted in greater secrecy than had been the practice under any other Administration – Conservative or Liberal – of which my brother had had personal knowledge. It was not even an enlightened autocracy. In Turkey notably, but in many other countries as well, it had lost the close personal touch with foreign aims and opinion which had been our strong point when we were served by such brilliant linguists and diplomatists as Sir Richard Burton.

It was because the Foreign Office knew this, and not because it had any love for their candid friend, that it frequently came to my brother for (unpaid) advice and services. Although, being out of office, he had regained complete freedom of speech and action, he never undertook a lecturing tour in Germany or America before submitting the gist of his political lectures to the Foreign Office and asking them if he could be of any help in shaping or reporting public opinion abroad (where, like Bernard Shaw, he was often held in more honour than in his own country).

Sometimes the Foreign Office took the initiative, and asked my brother to act as its unofficial agent, informer, and, in his published views, *ballon d'essai*. It was the weakness of Sir Edward Grey's conduct of Foreign Affairs that it was neither untrammelled by the divergent views of politicians of his own Party, nor frankly open to and controlled by national public opinion, as in America. Therefore it had to resort to all sorts of subterfuges and back ways to maintain any persistent line of policy. These methods, we now know, were all along misinterpreted by the Germans, just as at different times they have strengthened the French legend of *'l'Albion perfide'*. The statesmen who had been perfected in cricket rather than colloquial French shared my brother's enthusiasm for wild bird life in England, but he never, like his wild duck, became cosmopolitanly educated. He remained, in fact, insular. My brother complains frequently of the frigid, uneasy atmosphere at Foreign Office and Diplomatic dinners to which he was bidden by Sir Edward Grey, as he had been under more genial Administrations in the past. By contrast, he would instance typical examples of genially astute and well-informed diplomatists and statesmen with whom he had had to deal in relation to Foreign Powers. These were pre-eminently the late Lord Salisbury, King Edward, Lord Ripon in India, and, in a lesser degree, Sir William Harcourt. The last-named, as we know, was not a bosom friend of Sir Edward Grey, nor of the almost equally frigid, and (in all but his own interests) *rigid* Lord Rosebery.

It is necessary to be frank, as my brother always was, regardless of his own interests, in accounting for

and combating the war mentality and all that contributed to make it.

Regretfully, my brother came to recognize that Prussianism was the largest ingredient, but by no means the only one, in the cauldron of hatreds, fears, needs, greeds and passions which overwhelmed the world in 1914. And Prussianism was not always confined to Prussia.

In April, 1914, our old friend the Baron von Kühlmann was unostentatiously in Belfast, when German guns were landed for the Orangemen at Larne by the *Fanny* with the connivance of our Naval and Military authorities to resist the Home Rule Bill which had been three times passed by the House of Commons, and which under the Parliament Act was entitled to the Royal Assent notwithstanding its rejection by the Lords. It will be remembered that this was concurrent with Sir Edward Carson's meeting with the Kaiser, and Orange vows of preference for the rule of German King William rather than that of the Irish Parliament. Undoubtedly Carson's threat to march 'from Belfast to Cork' (which led directly to the creation of the National volunteers of Southern Ireland) was reported to the German General Staff, and was nearly the last impetus given to the War.

The Kaiser's chameleon, Councillor Kühlmann, came in a very different guise a month later to the Foreign Office dinner at the House of Commons at which all the Ambassadors were present. To my brother who knew him and who was most interested and observant, the Councillor of the German Embassy seemed to be the guest of honour and to take the prin-

cipal part. This banquet was supposed to celebrate an all-round agreement between the principal Powers as to their respective ambitions and future spheres of influence in the world. There were a number of Members of Parliament present, but no one seemed to have a very definite idea of what actually had been settled. Harry noted that the Baron von Kühlmann seemed overjoyed and bursting with benevolence. The Irish air seemed to have agreed with him, but no one in England knew anything about that then. He took his liqueur and coffee to the table where my brother was sitting, wrung his hand, and went off into transports of delight about the studiously vague Agreement which was to put an end to all rivalry and usher in peace and goodwill. He did let one rather large cat out of the bag, however, and that was that the British and German Governments had at last defined their respective 'spheres of reversion' in the Portuguese possessions in Africa. This was a euphemism for saying that, taking advantage of Portuguese financial indebtedness – the affairs of the new republic were at that time in very bad hands – the two principal creditor nations could throttle their little debtor with the demand 'Pay me what thou owest!' Translating the procedure of individuals sueing for debts to national dealings, they could with a show of justice demand the sale of lands to settle a debt in money. If other debtor nations, such as France, would agree to this method of liquidation, there might be something to be said for it. But its more or less enforced application to little Portugal alone (following, it is true, the precedent of the sale of the Carolines to Germany by Spain in 1898) seemed

to Harry an ill-omened way to peace. We now suspect it was merely a continuation of the policy of the German delegates to London in 1912, of separating Britain from the Latin countries, an attempt at bribery with stolen goods.

It may be remarked that my brother had no such compunction to allowing Germany to do what she liked with Turkey within limits governed only by concern for our personal safety. He would have retorted that if Portuguese rule was King Log that of Turkey was King Stork. It showed a most extraordinary lack of proportion, in my brother's opinion, that a section of our Press should have been nearly as much concerned for the state of mild serfdom which he had witnessed without seeing much wrong in the Portuguese cocoa islands as by the repeated and devilish massacres by the Turks of their unfortunate subject races. Writing as a historian of the origin of evils in present international politics, my brother laid the original blame for our long traditional support of Turkish tyranny on Queen Elizabeth, who disgusted Christendom by her alliance with its most ruthless enemy at a time when the Turks were almost at the gates of Vienna, when, to quote his passionate indictment, 'the Turks brought Egypt to ruin and nullity, reducing its population from eight to two millions, largely depopulated the rest of North Africa and the once flourishing Kingdom of Cyprus, reduced Crete to semi-savagery, devastated the Morea, wrecked the great renaissance of Persia, and made the Balkans shambles, deserts, manure heaps. What claim has the Turk to our further patience or pity?'

CHAPTER XIV

As soon as the Great War broke out, my brother offered his services to the Government anywhere and in whatever capacity they might be required in Africa. He was only fifty-six, so age could not have been a bar to re-employment. As to capacity in time of war: He had held the highest military post in Uganda. He had been the first to lead Indian troops in Central Africa warfare, and had learnt bush strategy in his entirely successful campaign against the confederacy of Arab slave-traders. He had closely studied the topography, peoples and languages on all the borders and much of the interior of German East Africa, and was *persona grata* with our French, Belgian and Portuguese allies. The British Government nevertheless left him without even the courtesy of an answer.

Not till the Armistice, and only by direct orders from Germany, did it secure the surrender of the enemy's Tanganyika forces, who during the whole duration of the War dodged our vastly superior armies in the bush and inflicted on them several humiliating defeats, carrying the war far into our own territories and those of our allies. Inexperience in local conditions is the only possible explanation of this inglorious, and therefore little known, chapter of our history.

General von Lettow-Vorbeck, the German leader and historian in this war, pays the highest tribute to our officers and men for their energy and bravery as

well as their chivalry. Statistics appear to be lacking on our side, but General von Lettow-Vorbeck bases his partly on our own admissions, and if he is anywhere near right we paid an appalling price in lives and treasure for plunging blindfold into the East African 'side-show'. In his book, *My Experiences of East Africa,* the German General, who goes pretty closely into detail, says his forces never exceeded 3,000 Europeans and about 11,000 black askaris. He says that this tiny force inflicted a loss in killed of about 60,000 out of a total number of 300,000 white, Indian and Negro soldiers. If our victory in East Africa had been as speedy as in the other German colonies, what a vast total of men, munitions and money would have been set free for strategically more decisive fronts! My brother held that the sacrifice through ignorance of geographical and other conditions of so many gallant lives was a crime and a blunder on the part of our Government comparable to that of Gallipoli.

Not being acceptable in a military capacity, therefore, my brother went to America, and spoke there for the allied cause in the most German parts, such as Buffalo and the Middle West. Everywhere his audiences, however, were polite and appreciative, and when he extended his lecturing tour across the frontier to Toronto and Ontario he was received with something like enthusiasm.

Since the Government could find no further use for him on his return home, he plunged into the greatest study of his lifetime – between tasks of a local patriotic character – namely, the compilation and completion of his gigantic Comparative Grammar of the Bantu

Languages. It was characteristic of him that he would *not* be put on the shelf, as though his life's work were done. His life's work went on almost as long as he had life in him. Just as on the morrow of his defeat at the Rochester Bye-Election he switched off the whole of his energy into his Natural History of British Mammals: so, when all the world was at war and he was denied any sphere of activity in its life and death struggle, he set himself to tabulate and preserve in two great volumes practically every one of the languages and dialects of the great African Bantu speech group and that also which he named Semi-Bantu. This was a quite unremunerative work, only made possible by the unique extent of his journeys in Africa and co-operation with fellow-scientists, mostly missionaries of all denominations and countries. Seeing the great utility of this labour of love, one would have thought that our Imperial and South African Governments – the wealthiest and the greatest territorially in Bantu Africa – would have assisted financially in the enterprise. But it was left to private generosity, and largely to that of my brother himself, to publish this standard work of permanent value to learning and to the Empire – to all intercourse, indeed, with Southern, Central, Eastern, and much of Western Africa. But for the help of private individuals, and the Rhodes Trustees, much more patriotic than our Government, the second volume of this great work might never have been put into print. As the price of the first volume alone (published by the Oxford University Press) was three guineas, it can be imagined that in War time its sale covered but a tiny fraction of the author's ex-

penses, not counting his labours, almost continuous since 1882.

The French Government, in contrast to our own, did appreciate the value of this work, and, in order to enable Harry to complete the Second Volume of it, gave him facilities to interview great numbers of its Negro soldiers stationed in the South and East of France, and record their languages. Never before in the history of the world had so many different peoples and languages been imported into Europe from more or less savage Africa. Though gratefully availing himself of it, my brother thought that on the European front Negroes ought only to be employed as a Labour Army. His journeys only just behind the fighting line, and occasionally into it, were utilized by the British Government as lecturing tours to our battle-weary troops, and in this connection Harry remarked what a vast multitude of recruits, and later on conscripts, were engaged on jobs, not directly combative, which might just as well have been done at less expense by African and Asiatic labour forces. Rather late in the day, and never sufficiently, was this policy adopted.

Always believing that the proper study of Mankind was man, my brother endeavoured to get into close personal touch with the soldiers who came to listen to his talks. Though constantly warring against the inadequate and often useless education of our more fortunate classes, Harry entertained an increasing respect for the splendid raw material which the average National School Englishman exemplifies, sometimes in spite of, quite as much as because of, the meagre education he receives in tender years – an education

which at any rate squanders no time on what Harry called the fantastic nonsense of Latin verse-making. In such Chinese-like and wildly inappropriate methods of educating our professional Army leaders, my brother saw some of the reasons why those leaders, in the earlier part of the war at any rate, fell short of the quality of those whom they led: 'The type that won the War, despite the many mistakes of our flurried strategicians; the type that so long as it lasts unspoilt will make England the predominant partner and Great Britain the predominant nation; the type out of which are made the blue-jacket, the petty officer, the police sergeant, the engine driver, the railway guard, solicitor's clerk, merchant service mate, engineer, air pilot, non-commissioned officer, head gardener, head keeper, farm bailiff, head printer, the trustworthy man-servant, the commissionaire of a city office – the type which ran the British world on an average income of £150 a year before the War.' (*Mrs. Warren's Daughter.*)

While out in France Harry got sufficiently seriously gassed to be laid up in hospital for some considerable time, in addition to which he over-strained his never robust constitution by incessant work and anxiety over public affairs. He knew too much, or thought he did, of his own ailments, actual and potential, and was not what is commonly known to nurses and doctors as a good patient. It was always difficult to tell if his sudden breakdowns and uprisings were influenced by his rapidly changing moods, or *vice versa*. There was something almost as disconcerting in his lightning recoveries as in the sudden stoppages of his strenuous

activities. In the early days of their married life, he announced with due solemnity to his wife his approaching end, at a time when a sharp touch of fever, apt, as malaria is, to recur after long residence in England, had brought down his spirits to zero. In great alarm, she went personally in search of a doctor, leaving Harry in bed in a darkened room. When she returned with the doctor and remedies appropriate to extreme needs, Harry was no longer groaning in bed, but playing the piano merrily downstairs, and singing, not too melodiously, his favourite piece from Gilbert and Sulivan, 'Kiss me, kiss me, kiss me! though I die of shame!'

Even when more fundamental ill-health began to get a hold on him in the years preceding, during and following on the War, his spirits would experience a joyous rebound while in a hospital or nursing home, and entering on the convalescent stage after an illness. Fortunately for the observance of a rule of diet, the only two classes of persons with whom Harry was apt to be diffident and unassertive were his own devoted men-servants, and Hospital Matrons. 'Not for *you,* Sir Harry,' Mr. Greaves, the butler would murmur, as he firmly withheld a coveted dish.

But as the War dragged on, it became impossible for Harry to jest in his old light-hearted way as one familiar friend after another fell a victim to it, and when many too old for the battle line were none the less cut short by the weight of woe and worry which darkened all the world. 'What an agony often accompanies affection,' he writes in reference to the death of an old friend. 'These dreadful partings! I would

belong to *any* religion which made reunion certain. Behind all my pessimism and doubt there still shines up a little hope that the essence of our character still survives.'

At this time he was pall-bearer at the funeral of the Duke of Norfolk, with whom he had had a good deal of intercourse in Arundel, and whom he much esteemed as a singularly modest but really sagacious statesman and as a man of very lovable character.

Sometimes the old friends who left the great Stage of life left it the more sadly because of the sword of discord which divided not only separate nations, but fellow-countrymen who in the days of peace had been fellow-workers, Mr. E. D. Morel, the fiery founder of the Congo Reform Association, whose zeal my brother had often tried to enlighten with discretion, now threw discretion to the wind, and in his vehement opposition to the War policy came into conflict with the law. Like other sympathizers with Passive Resistance, he found himself in a strangely mixed company, and cast over by the best of his friends. Harry had never completely agreed with him in time of peace, and differed strongly from his policy in the War. But, unlike most people in those desperate days, my brother was most averse to imputing unworthy motives to what he agreed was unwise conduct. While expounding calmly in the Press the illogicality or impracticability of Pacifism or untimely revolutionary tactics (Evolution – not revolution – was his motto in all things) he never thought the right cause was well served by personal abuse or unworthy imputations. He intervened more than once on behalf of wrong-

headed people whom he esteemed to be good men at heart. He must have done so on behalf of E. D. Morel, for I find the following little note of the year 1916:

'Dear Sir Harry:

I have been sent the *Westminster Gazette* with your article in it. It is extremely generous and kind of you to take up the cudgels on my behalf. I am much touched, and would give a great deal to be able to see eye to eye with you. I took no notice of that beast ——. I may do so some day, physically. One never knows.

With very sincere appreciation of your kindly act, not the first,

Yours sincerely,

E. D. Morel.'

There was something irresistible to my brother's sense of humour in the pugnacity of this and other Pacifists.

But he saw nothing but black tragedy in the far worse fate which overtook Morel's still more pugnacious partner of Congo Reform days – Sir Roger Casement. I have mentioned in an earlier chapter how our acquaintance with Casement began over Congo Reform and ripened into sincere esteem, even admiration, not lessened by the fact that Casement let his intense humanitarian feelings scatter his discretion, warp his judgment and embroil him with the Government which had conferred a well-earned knighthood upon him. Sharing experiences of the Consular Service in Africa and, with quite different deductions and results, sharing also grave misgivings as to the wisdom of the Permanent Officials at the Foreign Office, Sir

Roger Casement and my brother had differed as friends and had agreed to differ in friendship, or at the least with mutual respect.

When the Great War broke out, my brother lamented that the valour, chivalry and magnanimity of the Redmonds was so ill requited or encouraged. He denounced the provocative attitude of Carson as that of an enemy of our country. He esteemed Casement's gun-running and incitement to rebellion as only worse than Carson's in so far as it was in actual time of war. In this respect his abortive rising was in exactly the same legal category as that of De Wett earlier in the Great War, only that, unlike De Wett's, the only life taken was his own. My brother thought that if De Wett's punishment of imprisonment after battle and bloodshed had been Casement's when he signally failed to seduce Irishmen in Germany or in their own land, and if we had given the Irish then the same self-government as the Boers, we should have reaped from them likewise the reward of wisdom and justice. He thought that by hanging Casement and burying his body like that of a murderer we sent his soul marching on in the imagination of the Irish and of neutrals who up till then had been impressed by our sympathy for the subject races of enemies and allies alike and our horror at German 'frightfulness'. Now that we have at length conceded the principle of Ireland's nationality for which Casement sacrificed everything, so that an Irishman can be a good patriot in two countries, need we be less generous to Casement's reputation than to his fellow-failure, Kossuth?

In 1916 Harry was inclined to agree with Lord Lansdowne and the Pope that it would be better to end the War by indemnifying Belgium and mutually retroceding all conquests than to reduce civilization to bankruptcy.

If the Germans would not dissociate themselves from control of Turkey, we might leave them to it, he thought, and keep Arabia, Palestine and the lower Euphrates valley. That would have worked out very much like his original scheme of the world's partition. But when the Germans would not consent to give up Antwerp or an inch of Alsace-Lorraine the last fragment of his hope in their sanity vanished, and he was for the pursuance of the war *à outrance*. He entertained some hope in its later stages that the Austrians might be detached from Prussia by his old plan of recognizing Vienna once more as the capital of Germany, and we know that the ex-Empress of Austria did open pourparlers with the Allies, only to be abruptly checked by Prussia.

When the end of the War was in sight, Lord Curzon wrote several long letters to my brother, asking for his advice as to the disposal of the late German possessions. Unfortunately, his handwriting was so illegible that I can only read it in parts, and so cannot quote verbatim. Harry's answer was his opinion that the bulk of the old German possessions should be administered by us as free trade areas, as a slight, but not negligible, compensation for the immense loss to which we had been put through a cruel war which was most certainly none of our seeking. On reading his published views in the Press, the French papers

complained that he was being too lavish in Africa to his own country and not generous enough to France. He replied, emphasizing his long friendship with the French, and his intimate acquaintance with nearly all their African possessions. He pointed out that Britain got no such equivalent as Alsace-Lorraine, whose commercial, strategic and sentimental value to France outweighs a vastly greater area of frequently barren or unhealthy overseas dominions. He thought it rather unjust that in the actual war settlement France should be assigned nearly all the splendid mass of the Cameroons Mountain which he had once administered as a British possession before it was foolishly given to Germany.

My brother also considered that Italy was meanly treated in the War settlement, and ought to have been assigned by France something equivalent to the slice of East Africa which we allowed to be incorporated in Italian Somaliland. He suggested that the old trade route across the Sahara to Lake Chad, and onwards to the Atlantic Ocean through the Cameroons territory might fairly appease Italian aspirations. But that would have cut the vast French African empire in two, and France would not hear of it. My brother preached in vain the unwisdom of hindering Italy's absolutely inevitable and justifiable expansion. He knew, before Mussolini ever appeared, that a Dictator would in time arise in Italy who would preach his country's need for expansion with as much logic and sabre-rattling as had ultimately set the world ablaze in pursuance of Germany's tardily awakened colonial ambitions. A country like France, with a stagnant population, had

no right, my brother thought, to bottle up Italy's increasing millions. But the Bourbons were not the only Frenchmen who forgot nothing and learnt nothing. Harry thought that France might have spared herself a lot of trouble by assigning Syria to an Italian Mandate, instead of bombarding Damascus and intriguing with the Turks, from whom the Anglo-Arab alliance, and not France, had wrested the Lebanon.

Harry was disagreeably impressed, while travelling in France and the French zone of occupation on the Rhine immediately after the War, by the more than Prussian rudeness of officials, and a general tone so bitterly anti-British that it could already ignore six hundred thousand British graves in France and many more at the bottom of the deciding Sea which we had kept for her and ourselves and for the triumph of the Allied cause.

It may be of some interest to record that the War settlement of the world followed very closely indeed the lines advocated by my brother in print and illustrative maps ten years before the War broke out, except of course that Germany had lost the right to her old possessions and to any new ones. Harry had prophesied truly the return of Alsace-Lorraine to France, part of Schlesvig to Denmark, Bessarabia to Rumania, the ancient Venetian settlements in the Adriatic and the Levant to Italy, Palestine to the Jews and Finland and Poland to their own long-suffering peoples. But he never thought the world base enough to hand over blood-sodden Armenia once more to the Turks, when the philanthropic Americans had washed their hands of it, or that a professedly democratic

Russia would rob the Georgian Republic so barbarously of its justly won independence.

It was one of the greatest disappointments and keenest griefs of his life that the 'call of the blood' among so many peoples rightly struggling to be free was not answered till the whole world was blood-stained. As regards his own especial province of Africa, it was an agony for him to see the frightful loss of money in the Tanganyika campaign – money which might have transformed the continent in times of peace. It might, he thought, have deflected now wasted water from the Congo basin to restore fertility to inner South Africa, and from the pestilential swamps of the Upper Nile to the deserts of Lower Egypt. It might, by already known methods, have turned bitter waters into sweet on two thousand miles of sterile coast, and preserved and extended the precious forest, our surest barrier against drought and barrenness. Knowing, as he did, the progressive encroachment of the desert on once fertile lands in Africa, he was discouraged and saddened at the end of his life by the madness of humanity which turns its warfare upon itself, instead of fighting famine in food and timber in a world which, for very shame, after all its boastings, science should make safe for our children.

CHAPTER XV

BEFORE the end of the War, my brother made a few practical suggestions for the application of its lessons and the consolidation of whatever gains it may be said to have bestowed on us. First in importance in the last category was the unity for practical purposes of the British Empire, so splendidly demonstrated. My brother was very anxious that an Imperial Conference should be summoned by the King to devise machinery for unification, if not actual uniformity, in such matters as trade tariffs, weights and measures, coinage and Empire defence and government. Nothing like this was accomplished, to his great disappointment.

Another ideal of his, constantly urged in deputations and in print, was the simplification of the chaotic spelling of our language and that of the United States so that its world supremacy might be assured. My brother was a 'whole-hogger' in this respect, standing out for an absolutely phonetic rendering of all sounds, which could be adopted by other nations as well for their own languages, so that they could read English more or less correctly without a teacher and use it as a *lingua franca* in commerce and diplomacy. This entailed the addition of some new letters to the alphabet, and in other respects frightened the conservatism of the classically educated, and left the multitude quite cold.

His failure to obtain adequate support in these cherished aims tended to make my brother increasingly bitter on the subject of the unpractical and antiquated

education of our rulers, particularly the officials significantly named 'Permanent'. Their ignorance of geography and modern languages, true modern history and the scientific application of Natural History and botany, he pointed out, had been the cause of serious political and economic blunders. He blamed the same classical idolatry for the excessive monetary value put on Old Masters, entailing the semi-starvation of many modern painters of merit.

Another subject on which my brother 'let himself go' in no measured language all through the War and in the hard times of the Peace, was our expenditure on alcohol. As regards spirits, he was nearly a Prohibitionist, but saw little harm, and some good, in light wines, beer and cider. He thought that King George's example should have been followed by his Ministers, and a cautious curtailment inaugurated in our still enormous consumption of alcohol. This was the more evident to him since, as a Magistrate and in official connection with the allocation of War pensions, he had many opportunities for observing the temptations put in the way of soldiers on leave and of their wives. But here again his strictures were not popular. They lost any striking degree of appositeness when as a nation we decided to endow cinema stars rather than breweries, and sought exhilaration a little less dangerously in motor speed than in alcohol. Possibly Harry deduced from the success of the cinema, the motor-cycle and the side-car, where preaching had failed to impose sobriety, that preaching was in vain. He would never have admitted that he had ever preached, but, being descended from a long line of clerical ancestors, he

simply could not help it, whatever difference there might be in the presentation of the object and aim of his preachments. That he seasoned them with wit, still did not remove him immeasurably from pawky Scotch parsons or his clerical Uncle Sam, who deduced an original sense of humour in the Creator from the curl in the Pig's tail. He merely admonished a wider contumaciousness.

Harry's widening breach with Officialdom was constantly intensified by his critical attitude towards it, and gained him few friends. In England you can attack an individual to the utmost limit outside the law of libel, and gain popularity by so doing. But not one Englishman in ten thousand knows or cares one jot for the negligences and ignorances of our all-but anonymous army of Permanent Officials entrenched in inconspicuous Boards of Control. It required a Dickens to beard Bumble in his den.

My brother was always a fervent admirer of Dickens, and adopted him as his godfather, so to speak, when, at the age of sixty, he took to writing serious novels instead of the popularization of the Blue Book of which he had been past master for so long. His first work of fiction (apart from his early *History of a Slave,* which was really only the delineation of facts in the guise of fiction) was *The Gay-Dombeys.* This was an ingenious continuation of Dickens's Dombey family and their friends in our times. He kept very closely to fact in his portraiture under these pseudonyms of the political and Society leaders he had known, and in parts this book is largely autobiographical. It was sponsored by Mr. H. G. Wells in a very appreciative

foreword. In fact, Mr. Wells had been my brother's living god-father in fiction, for it was his encouragement and agency which overcame the initial opposition there always seems to be to the *début* of a novelist, no matter how well known he may have been in other spheres. My brother at about the same period was collaborating with Mr. Wells in his ambitious and astonishingly lucid *History of the World*. I happened to meet Mr. Wells a short time before he knew my brother, and I remember he stressed his appreciation of Harry's overflowing knowledge, even when this induced a certain discursiveness of style. Later on, when he had edited Harry's contribution to the *History of the World,* Mr. Wells complained that 'his weakness, or rather, his excessive strength, lay in the abnormal, though no doubt righteous, spelling of well-known historical names. He would have Solomon, Shelomoh, and Hebrews, Ibrim, which seemed likely to be confusing to the ordinary reader.' This was merely one manifestation of Harry's attempt, far too late in the day, to induce the public to re-christen well-known characters and institutions with names which may possibly have been given them two to four millenniums ago in the land of their birth. When he alluded defiantly to St. James as 'the Apostle Jacob', he came perilously near to his tiresome clerical ancestors who made it a point of honour to call Sunday nothing but 'the Lord's Day'.

The Gay-Dombeys made a decided mark in England, and was even more read in the United States, where it started a new school of American novels. It introduced into the story living characters (including

its author!) by their real names. This gave great verisimilitude to the other characters, no less real, whose stage names, so to speak, were but a very thin disguise. Old friends and strangers alike wrote to him by the score to thank him for taking them back into the actual realms of their youth in the 'seventies, 'eighties and 'nineties of the last century.

His thumbnail sketches of a week-end party at Hatfield in the days of the late Lord Salisbury, of the wooing of a middle class constituency, of the strange characters who jostled one another on the stage of London society in late Victorian and Edwardian days, and of the world of high officialdom as he knew it – all carry the impress of real life under the thinnest possible disguise of fiction. We gain an insight as to how affairs, important and unimportant, are managed by the officials who guide the destinies of nations. His treatment of sex matters could be ruthlessly frank without ever being indecent. His style was as regardless of classical traditions as his essays on education. As Rebecca West remarked, 'Writing a book is to Sir Harry just a welling up of surplus energy. If he feels like saying a few words about dinosaurs, they go in, and very cheerful and readable they are.'

In his second novel – *Mrs. Warren's Daughter* – instead of depicting the descendants of Dickens characters, Harry, having now attained the full age of indiscretion, sixty-one, borrowed Vivie and her mother from *Mrs. Warren's Profession,* with the permission of course of Mr. Bernard Shaw, and carried them through the Suffrage struggle and the Great War. His third novel, *The Veneerings* again carried on the

descendants of Dickens people. His fourth essay into fictionized fact made no pretence of being 'a harliquinade to another fellow's play', as Rebecca West put it, but was alive with his own impressions of Africa, and called *The Man Who Did the Right Thing*. This was in the nature of a satire on certain strata of Missionary life, written by one who though an Agnostic was a constant and strenuous champion and friend of missionaries. For a time my brother's novels were reported to be among the best sellers and were favourites at lending libraries. Not all of them, however: for it was reported that at certain libraries his books, together with some of Mr. H. G. Wells, Mr. Bernard Shaw, Anthony Hope, Arnold Bennett, and W. B. Maxwell were locked up in a kind of Blue Beard's Cupboard by tight-lipped librarians, who marked them with a red star label as dangerous reading! This was a case where a label was a libel, and Bernard Shaw for one considered that this self-constituted censorship of librarians might call for legal action. The French Press got hold of the story and made merry at the expense of Britannic prudishness. It will be admitted that my brother's books were banned in very good company, and when the matter was ventilated in the Press the ensuing discussion redounded to the good name and popularity alike of his novels. It is probable, however, that this unauthorized censorship of autocratic, narrow-minded Librarians still requires investigation. There are undoubtedly books unfit for indiscriminate circulation in a Rate-aided Library, but the responsibility for naming such should rest with a Committee.

I have no record as to what my brother himself thought of book censorship of this responsible and controllable kind, qualified by a right of appeal, unless his views thereon ran parallel to what he wrote about Stage Censorship. He described this as 'a hateful padlock on the true exposition of history and morality, kept up to please one or two timid courtiers, afraid lest our Monarchy will be endangered if a true presentment is given of Henry VIII, Queen Elizabeth, or George IV.'

Harry always enjoyed the society of fellow-authors. They never disappointed him when off their stage, as theatrical people had done. Staying with Mr. H. G. Wells, he made the acquaintance of Countess Russell ('Elizabeth' of the *German Garden* fame), and pleased her as much as her cleverness and delightfully ready wit attracted him. She suggested that he and his wife should visit her Chalet Soleil at Sierre. Those who have been to the now well-known winter resort of Montana will know Sierre in the Rhône valley below it. In this beautiful mountain country my brother recovered his health and good spirits, which had suffered not only from the War but from the depressing atmosphere and results of the so-called Peace. He was always quick to expand in sunshine, and the Chalet Soleil was well named in every sense.

Countess Russell had the same happy faculty as the late Sir James Knowles of the *Nineteenth Century* of combining varied and piquant salads of people who differed most widely from each other. For example, during this visit to her Swiss chalet in 1920 my brother met there, amongst others, the Count Walkoff, once

in attendance on the late Czar, and Mr. Clifford Allen who had been lately visiting Russia with members of the British Labour Party, and was a keen advocate of revolutionary methods. There was also the Right Hon. Augustine Birrell – anything but revolutionary, Mr. Cobden Sanderson, founder of the Dove Library, and his wife, a daughter of the great Free Trade innovator, and others who were soldiers, Pacifists and various other stimulating opposites. Conversation in such a house could never be dull or conventional; yet quiet was always obtainable when desired for serious work, and Harry wrote a great part of *The Man Who Did the Right Thing* there.

Concerning this book, he confided to the American public that the real pleasure he derived in composing such romances was the way in which they enabled him to live over again a 'very happy and interesting past life'. He added, ' I have strong prepossessions and dislikes, and vivid likings, and as these are in accord with American sentiments, I suppose that is why I have evoked such a hearty and heartening response in the New World. My English reviewers are sometimes apt to declare that this or that incident, episode, portraiture, opinion is not true because they don't want it to be true; but it is or has been true nevertheless. My passionate regard for realism is such that I have introduced very little in my novels which has not had its main foundation in fact'.

This expresses what I know to have been the case, that during the present decade my brother derived most of his zest for life retrospectively. Africa and living at high pressure had taken a heavy toll of his

health and vitality, leaving him frequently tired, dispirited and nervously sensitive to the annoyance of comparative trifles, which were by no means trifles to him. The litter left by a gypsy encampment in his favourite woods would make him squander his nervous energy on an eloquent campaign which usually completely missed its mark, since the gypsies did not read his strictures and aspersions on their ancestry in half-crown Reviews, and country policemen merely moved them on to another bit of choice woodland, where they committed precisely the same enormities. I am sure my brother felt resentment that the gypsies were white savages and not black ones, amenable to his righteous but determined despotism.

Truth to tell, Harry had a great deal more sympathy with unspoilt savages and primitive races who knew not the uses of paper and therefore could not strew it about the countryside than with large numbers of his fellow-countrymen. Whenever he learnt of an act of cruelty or injustice in British Africa against either Negroes or imported Indians he would hurl his anathemas against the wrong-doers or those who seemed to him to be sheltering them or palliating their offence. From time to time I discover among his correspondence and Press cuttings most abusive rejoinders to his indictments. Those of us who were by him towards the close of his life got to dread his noticing any abuse in which he might feel himself in duty bound to intervene. Detecting an excessively high blood pressure, the doctors advised him to give up public speaking, and he shunned more and more the almost equal fatigue of public dinners and prolonged

visits to London. He fitted up a Twelfth Century cottage, hidden in a charming, secluded, old-world garden adjoining the Priory as a studio, where he continued to paint and write and read. In 1923 he brought out through Messrs Chatto & Windus, *The Story of my Life,* which it has been my object in the present work to supplement, with such additional matter, differently treated, as a man cannot very well say of himself.

The last book which my brother wrote – a novel called *Relations* – was his fortieth volume, not including Blue Books. The stroke which began to impair his physical powers happened when he was engaged upon it, and he finished it with difficulty. The exertion of doing so hastened, I believe, a second and more serious stroke which affected the power of his right hand. Indomitably, he set himself laboriously to train his left to write legibly. When, for anything of length, he dictated to me, it was piteous to see his once quick and brilliant brain fumbling and groping for expression where once it had taxed the speed capacity of the quickest stenographers. In both talking and walking he had been the speediest man I have ever met. It used to be said humorously that he had been the death of many a short-winded, apoplectic or 'hearty' man who took retirement, unlike Harry, to mean leisurely action in all things. And now he could only visit his garden and the country round in a bathchair, with an occasional longer motor drive, which he always directed should take him through the least spoilt bits of the Sussex woods and downs. His tongue fell silent, but his eyes spoke much.

Probably the last time he was able to put a cross on paper to mark the signature his hand could no longer manage was when that indefatigable champion of birds, Mrs. H. J. Massingham, showed him a petition for prohibiting the importation of plumage and its attendant massacre of beauty.

It happened that his end came away from his Sussex home, for he died very peacefully a few days after he had been taken with great care to visit a sister in the North.

My own last impression of him was his turning over restlessly the pages of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, to which he had contributed a good many articles, and searching, it would seem in vain, for some fragment of the world's history which might be news to him. 'I want to know' had always been a very frequent and characteristic preface to his remarks. But in the wakeful watches of the night preceding his last, long sleep his significant words were of knowledge unattained in his all but seventy years of strenuous searching: 'This mystery!'

Many friends stood by his body when on the 4th of August, 1927, it was laid to rest in the sweet, solemn old churchyard of Poling, amid the Sussex scenery he had loved so dearly. The Societies which had honoured his achievements on their behalf honoured him still by their representatives and their last tributes. One of the wreaths bore the expression of 'A tribute of the deepest respect from the President of Liberia', in grateful recognition of his three or four years' work for that little country. But the British and American papers which devoted leading articles to his life, noted with

surprise that by his graveside there was no official representative of the Government for which he had worked as long as he was allowed. Perhaps the anniversary of the Great War, on which my brother's funeral occurred, so preoccupied our Foreign Office with its problems that it forgot altogether a man who had fought for the lives and freedom of its humblest protégés, and in so fighting had spilt the smallest possible minimum of blood and treasure?

Here is a translation of words inscribed on the tomb by the King of Uganda:

'His faithfulness and integrity in dealing with the Baganda show that Great Britain wants all under her protection to be free.'

I do not think that Harry would have wished for a better epitaph than this.

Intimate friends in Sussex have erected in Poling Church a tablet of equally happy wording:

In Memory of
Sir Harry Johnston,
G.C.M.G., K.C.B., D.Sc.,
Administrator, Soldier,
Explorer, Naturalist,
Author and Painter.
1858 – 1927.
Vir Fortis Audax Mitis Ingenio Magno.

I am tempted to leave the résumé of my brother's life at that. Yet perhaps there is need of a summary of its visible results on the lives and thoughts of living peoples, and of the reasons which kept him and left him at the end an unofficial free lance.

His creation of the phrase 'From the Cape to Cairo' implied and accomplished far more than British political supremacy throughout the whole length of the eastern side of Africa. He lived up to the true meaning of the word 'Protectorate'. His constant endeavour was to educate not only the governed, but also their governors, in the building up of Negro nations of prosperous peasants where he had found a welter of slavery and internecine war. He procured for his protégés not only security of land tenure, but also the greatest recognition of political freedom compatible with their advance in civilization, their national safety, and concern for the happiness of the individual. And he found it possible to further the interests of the native without sacrificing any of the necessary prestige of the white man – quite the contrary.

Not content with adding some four hundred thousand square miles to the Empire, he added greatly to our knowledge of its territories. In the course of his long official and unofficial connection with Africa he never used his knowledge to enrich himself, though he gave as much attention to the practical as to the purely scientific interest of its living, vegetable and mineral resources. He rejected more than one chance of filling the comfortable and politically powerful rôle of an 'African magnate'. Instead, he broadcasted his discoveries of coal, iron, and other metalliferous products without profit to himself, and gave the best years of his life to the disinterested service of the African race, and much concern to the desirable preservation of the wonderful African fauna and forests. Hatred of oppression, love of beauty, and a thirst for knowledge in

many fields were the ruling passions and motive powers of his life.

It has been hard to do justice in this volume to all the activities he crowded into fifty years of work. His industry and determination, strengthened by a justified self-confidence, carried his talents into bewilderingly diverse channels. He might have been more widely known and appreciated had he accomplished less and spoken in fewer languages. He spread himself too much – was too much of an Admirable Crichton.

It was a real misfortune that his physical stature and the carrying power of his voice did not match his character and ability. In conversation he had one of the most pleasing, musical and persuasive voices I have ever heard. But when he spoke from a platform the first impression he made was that of quite a little man, inclined to plumpness in middle life, who pitched his voice too high to be pleasing or impressive.

This gave an excuse to the disposers of great posts, who had their own less reputably explained objections to him, to block his advancement. If his début into English politics had been a success instead of a failure, he might have found his apotheosis in the Viceroyalty of India. He was popular with the middle classes during the whole of his active life, but he never fired the imagination of the unlearned, nor secured the approval of our Mandarins. They more or less jockeyed him into resigning from the Government Service in 1901. He was then only forty-seven, and had a right to expect the allotment of some active sphere, considering that politicians of that age are still considered young men.

In spite of unfair stalemate in the Public Service twenty-six years before his death, he continued to serve the public to good purpose, though unofficially, during nearly the whole of that last phase, and his reputation was never dimmed. Notwithstanding the diversity of his activities, he was always recognized firstly by the rather pompous term of 'a great Pro-consul'. Yet his precocity in the public service had been such that he had already obtained fame as a mere vice-consul, forming the subject of debates in Parliament and of cartoons in the Press while still in his twenties.

While this precocity persuaded the Press of the justice and likelihood of his filling the greatest posts in middle age, it was really one of the causes of offence to resentful diplomats, bureaucrats and politicians, tacitly leagued against this 'outsider'. They had their way when in Lord Salisbury's old age and on the death of Sir Percy Anderson at the Foreign Office there arose a Pharaoh who knew not Joseph. In plain words, there arose a Joseph – Chamberlain – determined that the Pharaohs of the British Empire should be his own men, and none other.

My brother had pleased the late Lord Salisbury as much by his candid, ingenuous nature as by his ability. If Harry had cultivated the gentle art of political courtiership with a tenth of the zeal he bestowed on many unremunerative pursuits, he would not have had the door to office obstinately shut in his face.

Learning no worldly prudence from his rebuff by the Chamberlain clique, he proceeded to antagonize Mr. Asquith by a stream of uncompromising criticism, with no other motive than that of intense convic-

tion; the conviction of a whole-hearted and consistent Liberal, in other than a slavishly Party sense.

Throughout his life Harry persisted in the rôle of the tactless, truth-telling child in Hans Andersen's allegorical story, *The Emperor's New Clothes*. Weavers of imaginary 'magic' vesture persuaded an Emperor that not only was he most gorgeously adorned when stripped to the skin, but that everyone could see and appreciate this wonderful vesture excepting only such courtiers as were unfit to hold their situation or were unpardonably stupid. No one therefore dared own that to their eyes the Emperor was naked, and went through all the pantomime of admiring his clothes, just as to-day you see people pretending to admire a type of music in which they really appreciate nothing. Only one little child in the admiring crowd exclaimed 'But the Emperor has nothing on!' His constant repetition of the remark drew the common people to an acknowledgment of the truth. The story does not go on to relate what horrible punishment was meted out to the *enfant terrible* by the courtiers whom he made to look as ridiculous as their naked Emperor.

The sophistry of no magician can 'fool all the people all the time'. My brother mostly got his way in the matter of reforms in Africa. At home, he encountered more Mandarins sworn to the gospel of wait and see. But women are now on a practical equality with men and no longer demand the slaughter of the most beautiful birds throughout the world for their adornment. Indignation at the wholesale spoiling of our countryside is beginning to make itself felt as well as heard. Appreciation of a Fonetik Alfabet lags, as does the

bringing up to date of our education, particularly that of our public services, against which Harry tilted in vain. Still, for the most part he tilted as effectively as he prophesied truly. The worst that can be said of him is that he attempted too much.

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